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BERLIN—ROME—MOSCOW

THERE has been no real change in the last week. Two dictators have staged their own apotheosis on the Brenner Pass; we knew they were allies and that the Duce would be a belligerent only if the time comes when he can gain more by fighting than by bargaining. Nor is there anything surprising in talk of a Berlin-Rome-Moscow Axis. Mussolini has had excellent relations with Stalin in the past; he thinks in terms of power, not of ideology, and if he is assured that Stalin will not advance Russian absorption beyond a given limit in the Balkans he is quite ready to arrange with the other two dictators for a partition of the Balkans into spheres of influence. How far plans have matured for Hungary and Rumania is not yet certain, but Count Teleki's visit to Rome and King Carol's pardon of members of the pro-Nazi Iron Guard are significant hints. A dramatic personal touch is added by the departure of Mme. Lupescu from Rumania. No doubt we shall soon be treated by the dictators to a declaration of their invincibility, omniscience and omnipotence. That need not disconcert anyone. The truth behind it—that Hitler has won a victory in Scandinavia, that Britain and France have not the power to stop them in the Balkans and that Mussolini may sometime embarrass us in the Near East—all this was already sufficiently obvious.

Mr. Sumner Welles postponed his visit until Hitler and Mussolini had conferred. He declares in categorical terms that he carries back with him no peace proposals. This we can well believe. He came to explore the possibilities of a truce and goes back with data for the President, who is unlikely to attempt a settlement unless there is serious hope of success. Who put forward the eleven points of a settlement or the compromise suggestions that followed is obscure. What should be clear enough is that if proposals are made Britain and France should not make the mistake they made on October 6th and reject them without practical proposals on their own behalf. The trouble is that the real counter to Hitler is beyond the imagination of our rulers. If Britain and France appear to the world mainly to be fighting to maintain their hold on Gibraltar and other strategic points and not to have even within their own *Lebensraum* any constructive idea for the world, they will not evoke enthusiasm amongst the masses at home or in the Empire or among the neutrals. Nor will anyone listen in Germany. How far is this side of the matter apparent to Mr. Sumner Welles? He seems to have been influenced by the charm that Mussolini knows how to exert; he is naturally deeply concerned about world and, incidentally, American trade " after the war." If Totalitarianism is not to win over more than one Continent we cannot, any of us, afford to wait to reconstruct after the war. The need is to build on our side of the ramparts an international society which gives hope as well as freedom, and for that immediate task of reconstruction American co-operation is surely essential. We hope that Mr. Roosevelt understands this. His speech this week dealing with the rights of small nations and religious and personal freedom was on traditional Wilsonian lines. But the matter with Versailles, and with the twenty fatal years since, was the failure to see the necessity of international economic reconstruction.

Meanwhile in Britain and France the main concern has been with the Finnish collapse. Mr. Chamberlain, as our Parliamentary correspondent shows, made a vigorous and effective defence, and his retort that safe people thousands of miles away have not the right to throw stones, was justified. He again held out to Norway and Sweden the possibility of allied help; he seemed not to appreciate the reasons why small States actually prefer to struggle on in a precarious neutrality rather than to offer their soil as a battle-ground. The speeches of Mr. Law and of Mr. Harold Macmillan, recently back from Finland, have been little reported in the British press; they voiced effectively a profound uneasiness at British leadership. In France the attack is politically more serious. Both the French and British Cabinets are likely to undergo changes in the near future. That we shall get the imaginative leadership we need from the men at present politically available seems too much to hope.

Government Concessions

Since last January Labour speakers, under the able leadership of Mr. Lawson, have been pressing for a more generous scale of allowances for dependents of men serving in the forces. Last Tuesday Mr. Oliver Stanley announced the new regulations which have now been issued as a White Paper. The main concession—and it is a very real one—relates to those dependents who have hitherto been excluded on the ground that they are not incapable of supporting themselves. Thus for the first time the mother of a serving soldier who has relied on something from her son to put by for her old age, although she herself is capable of work, is now permitted to draw an allowance. Another important gain is that in future dependents may draw an allowance in respect of more than one member of the Forces. Mr. Stanley has also slightly improved the conditions applying to women separated from their husbands. In the debate last Tuesday the Labour speakers pressed for still further improvements, but when the matter was reopened on Thursday Mr. Stanley was disinclined to give way. This week an important and less unexpected concession in the matter of workmen's compensation, was announced by Sir John Anderson. For the first time, but as a temporary measure until the whole system can be overhauled, a distinction is made between the compensation payable to single and married men. Without any means test—indirectly the Labour attacks on the new pensions plan have had their effect—a man who is injured will now receive increased compensation in respect of his wife and of each child.

The Debate on Shipping

In the course of Monday's debate the friends of the shipowners raised their complaint that neutral owners are being paid much more for their services than the owners of British vessels. But, as Sir Arthur Salter pointed out, this is no argument at all for allowing British owners to amass huge profits at the national expense. Neutral owners are in a position to charge high prices because of the scarcity of vessels: British owners must, like other British capitalists, be content with a reasonable return on their money. For the rest, the debate was notable chiefly for Mr. Shakespeare's insistence that the Admiralty, to which the control of all shipbuilding has now been transferred, was clearly the department able to strike the best balance between naval and other claims—a proposition which does not appear to the layman quite so self-evident as Mr. Shakespeare supposes it to be. Incidentally, Mr. Shakespeare paid a high tribute to the Trade Unions for their co-operation, and suggested that the problem of expanding output was more that of labour shortage than of a deficiency of shipyard accommodation. This is surprising, if it is true, in view of the number of yards put out of action by Shipbuilders' Security in recent years.

Mr. Shinwell, in a vigorous speech which impressed the House, exposed the muddle in the directions given to ships. His charges remained unanswered; for Sir John Gilmour is one of the three Ministers of whose incapacity there is no question.

The Labour Party's Agenda

The agenda for the Labour Party Conference, which is to be held at Whitsuntide, is again notable for the fewness of the resolutions sent in by Trade Unions, in comparison with the number emanating from the Local Labour Parties. There is a concentrated attack from parties all over the country upon the political truce, which finds practically none but official defenders. Anti-war resolutions of varying complexion come from a number of local parties, chiefly in the more backward areas; but a few big centres, such as Edinburgh, are represented. Resolutions backing the attitude of the Executive and the Parliamentary Party on the general war issues are few; but this is probably not significant, as the critics are obviously more likely to submit resolutions than those who are content with what has been done. Apart from resolutions on the truce and the questions of war and peace, the agenda deals mainly with questions of home policy. There are many protests against the new Means Tests which are being introduced, and many demands for improved treatment for pensioners and other classes of sufferers from the rising cost of living. Not many, it should be noted, deal with the matters of soldiers' and sailors' pay and dependants' allowances. On the whole, the coming Conference looks like being mainly a tussle over the political truce, with relatively little criticism of the official policy on other issues.

Mr. Burgin and the Behars

Mr. Morrison's attack on the agents who were receiving commissions for bringing firms into contact with the Ministry of Supply was vigorous and effective. There is no doubt that the House was shaken by Mr. Burgin's inability to explain the incident of the visiting card in the possession of Captain Ullman, or to give any reason for the dismissal of those two young Conservative candidates, the Behar brothers. But it is satisfactory to note that, in spite of very searching examination, Mr. Morrison was did not find any indication of corruption. Indeed, the probable explanation of the affair is that the motto "Business as usual" had been applied in the case of commissions as well as less undesirable features of peacetime economy. To many City men employed in connection with the armaments industries, it seems a part of natural law that the price of commodities should be increased by the 2¼ per cent. commission which the agent receives. But the public views the matter otherwise.

The Finnish Debate

From our Political Correspondent.—The Prime Minister is an astonishing man. He came down to the House on Tuesday to make a statement on the Finnish "debacle," which was bound to be of critical importance to his administration, as well as one of the most difficult speeches of his political career. He spoke with such gusto and conviction—quoting figures of war materials asked for, ordered, and actually despatched, which might mean anything or nothing, but which seemed at the moment, in his hands, to build up an unanswerable case—that when he sat down he received an ovation from both sides. It was a *tour de force*, and proved once again that his personal hold over the present House of Commons is enormous and, when he chooses to exercise it, practically irresistible.

Mr. Attlee, who followed, was at a considerable disadvantage. There is a sharp difference of opinion amongst his followers about the Finnish business, which might have flared up at any moment. Accordingly he had to tread very warily. Actually he trod so warily that an irreverent Liberal back-bencher referred (in an undertone) to the Parliamentary Labour Party as "the Sweden of domestic politics."

The fact remains that the Leader of the Opposition confined his criticism to a few general observations on the comfortable and safe topic of "drive and efficiency," and that the Labour back-benchers subsequently took little part in the debate. Confronted by the Prime Minister's unexpected personal triumph, neither Sir Archibald Sinclair nor Mr. Hore-Belisha were at their best. The former allowed himself to be side-tracked by interruptions on irrelevant points of detail, and the latter delivered an able but harsh "set" speech which failed to catch the imagination of the House, or to convince it.

Not until the quiet voice of Mr. Law was heard speaking from the Government back-benches did that strange, subtle electricity, which denotes a heightening of political tension before Members are consciously aware of it, begin to creep into the Chamber. Mr. Law has three qualities which may carry him one day to very great heights. They are a personal and intellectual integrity which is quite unassailable, a passion which is well controlled, and political courage of the rarest order. He said that once again the Prime Minister had had to come down to the House and tell a sorry tale of triumphant aggression at the expense of a small free country. And he suggested that those Ministers who had been mainly responsible for the failures and disasters of the past two years should now go. The effect of this blasphemy—for that, in the opinion of many Members, is what it amounted to—was indescribable.

Mr. Harold Macmillan subsequently produced figures which seemed to prove that there had been considerable and avoidable delays on our part in furnishing assistance to the Finns, and Dr. Dalton wound up for the Opposition with a really good fighting speech on the general direction—or rather lack of direction—of the war. But it was undoubtedly the Prime Minister's day. He was in attendance throughout the debate, and had the satisfaction of announcing the news of a successful air raid on the island of Sylt at the end of it.

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SIX MONTHS OF WAR

The dictators plan the distribution of their spoils and parade their unity to frighten the Western Powers. Gradually the public in Britain and France awake to the realities. They learn from M. Daladier and Mr. Chamberlain that it was Germany's threat to join with Russia in invading Scandinavia that terrorised Norway and Sweden and forced the Finns to accept Stalin's peace. They learn that Rumania and Hungary are being compelled to yield to Germany's pressure. As for Mussolini, he has always planned to build his Roman Empire out of the relics of the French and British—a fact which neither Power had recognised when they were in a position during the Abyssinian or Spanish wars to overthrow him without fear of serious war. To-day he reveals himself openly repudiating neutrality, offering economic aid to Hitler and promising military aid too, if and when he thinks his moment ripe. Recognising these facts, the British and French publics wonder whether a reshuffle of governments would improve this situation. They ask for leadership; sometimes they demand "action," too often vaguely implying a headlong rush into some ill-considered military adventure. The first need is for something quite different—the final excision of wish-fulfilment from all our souls. Let the Conservatives, the Liberals and the Socialists perform this operation on themselves and they will release energies repressed by an ugly growth.

The first fact we must recognise is that no speeches or propaganda can eradicate the history of the last six years. For good or for ill, to avoid war and to placate Germany, we permitted the authority of the League, the sanction of international law, the independence of small and friendly nations, to be undermined. While we appeased Germany, Hitler prosecuted his war on Europe; the small States were finally left, not with a choice between collective security and submission, but between submission while terms were possible, and submission, unconditional and terrible, to brute force. It is futile now to allot blame to our opponents, virtue to ourselves: our only task is to realise that it happened, and that six years of indecision and selfish and unimaginative policy cannot be wiped out by a few speeches. The only decisive action in this war so far has been the German invasion of Poland; when our aeroplanes dropped their flares over Posen, not only Poles but Scandinavians and Rumanians as well, may not have viewed the exploit with the same enthusiasm as the British public. That it was absurd to guarantee Poland without first obtaining Russia's alliance is now immaterial: that we guaranteed her, and did nothing to implement the guarantee, is all that the world will admit.

We are still reaping the fruits of Munich. Not only Germany, but the U.S.S.R. and south-eastern Europe as well, accepted that agreement as the surrender of Franco-British influence east of Germany. Whatever their intentions, by allowing Czechoslovakia to be conquered, the Western Powers handed to Germany the *Lebensraum* of Hitler's dreams. The declaration of war did not annul the gift, except in our own minds. No amount of diplomacy can conceal the fact that, as far as the Black Sea, Hitler can in the last resort disregard British and French threats and intentions. The men who now control this area are Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini.

This is the final result of the collapse of Geneva. Even after the retirement of America the League might have been developed into an international federation. In the most realistic estimate it was a military combination designed to defend the European nations from military invasion, and this military combination was supported by the unchallenged naval supremacy of France and Britain. Now—and this is the great lesson of the first six months of war—land-power has passed to Germany, in partnership with Russia, and Britain and France exert their influence only in those areas where the long arm of naval power can penetrate. It is our naval power, not fear of Communism, which still keeps Spain neutral and Italy non-belligerent, and which gives Turkey confidence sufficient to maintain her present attitude. Wherever land-power prevails, from Vladivostok to the North Sea—Hitler and Stalin dispose: where sea-power is of account, we hold our own. Where the two interlace, in Scandinavia, in the Near East, the battle is still undecided.

So, like the old Roman *limes*, the Maginot Line now defends the maritime western civilisation, while the British and French navies, preserving their control of the open seas, enable France and Britain to draw on the wealth of their Empires and to maintain relations with the U.S.A. and the rest of the world. This is the vast *Lebensraum* of our war-economy, while Germany draws on the huge undeveloped areas of Eastern Europe and the still ill-organised resources of Asiatic Russia. The dreams of General Haushofer, founder of "geopolitics" and philosopher of Hitler's strategy, are beginning to emerge as the shape of a world, engaged in total warfare, despite the fact that most of the countries are still "neutral," and the armies passive.

The first six months of war have been spent in drawing the conclusions of history. Neither side has gained any advantage upon the other's ground. Hitler's successes in the Balkans are only considered defeats by those who refused to recognise the consequences of the decision of Munich, which British and French Governments vainly tried to reverse six months later. Had their recent policies been conducted by a strategic and military genius, he could not have prevented these consequences. Nor could propaganda, however efficient, have changed the issue. Only if Hitler's land-power is destroyed—either by the Western Powers or by his friends in the Kremlin—will it be possible to offer to the subject peoples, or to the neutrals within his grip, a renewal of freedom.

What can and should be criticised is a policy which remains nothing but a reaction to the moves of Hitler. For six years he has had the initiative and mesmerised Europe into a submission to his will. In peace and in war the British and French Governments failed to act upon the motives and principles implicit in democracy; they have constructed nothing themselves and been content to follow where the Führer led, sometimes willingly and now with feverish opposition. Here the lesson of Finland is clear; if the cause of Scandinavian independence was one which we had the power and desire to make part of our cause at the meeting of the Supreme War Council on February 5th, it was equally ours in November, on September 2nd and before the outbreak of war. If we were determined to stand by those small democracies, then the time for active preparation and for propaganda was when we first knew from the Russian negotiations that Finland was threatened. But if, as may well have been the case, our Government and Staff did not think it wise or practicable to help Finland, the position was unchanged when Stalin, on Hitler's instigation, did actually begin the threatened attack. The good intentions of a Great Power gain small respect if they are first roused by the initiative of another and if then fail to be effective.

These remarks are the more pertinent because we have in the Near East an ominously similar situation. Here, as in Scandinavian, sea-power and land-power interlace. But here, in contrast with Scandinavia, we have an army and an ally, Turkey, in close relations not only with ourselves but with Russia as well. If we omit to take measures against Nazi and Soviet pressure on Turkey, we can be sure what the result will finally be. The special constable who waits for a formal appeal by telephone from a householder threatened by two burglars, need not keep a truncheon. Nor can he be surprised if the householder comes to terms with the burglars, turns round and calls him names. It is no use for him to argue that he would have liked to help, but it was very difficult. If he cannot help, he had better take off his uniform and start guarding his own house.

No-one, outside the Government, can proffer useful advice on the technical military problems of our Near Eastern policy. But we can urge with reason that in areas where we should not in the last instance give sufficient physical aid, we should cut our losses. Furthermore, in those neutral zones which lie between the spheres of influence of the land and sea powers all activity is futile unless our forces are co-ordinated and combined with propaganda which is part of policy and which serves to counter internal aggression.

And here we come to the heart of the problem. The struggle to-day is not only between the land-powers and the Western sea-powers, but also between the Totalitarian brave new world and the old world of Western Europe. The Totalitarians, whether Nazi or Communist, are fighting to conquer not merely the territories of the west, but the spirit of man: their wars are revolutionary wars and at the same time wars of two secular religions upon a doubting, insecure and unhappy world. They have the dynamic of youth and the hopelessness of middle age as their chief support.

To counter their aggression, whether at home or in neutral countries or among their own peoples, we need above all a social purpose. Each in its own way, they offer to man a place in society at the cost of freedom. Can we offer him a place in society for which he need not pay the price of slavery to the State? Will the hard ineluctable necessities of war force us to collectivise our social system, and unloose those social forces which can prevent collectivism from turning into slavery to a political or economic interest? These, not the peace proposals or spring offensive, are the crucial questions of the hour. Compared with them the activities of diplomatists and generals are shadow battles. When we compare the opposing Powers in terms of material or military strength, a deadlock seems inevitable. When we see the conflict as the clash of opposing philosophies, we realise that whether "war" continues or "peace" comes, the inner battle will be fought out to the bitter end. Western man will either be conquered by Totalitarianism or he will fashion a new social order.

FOOD, FOREIGN TRADE AND THE FUTURE

WE tackle our economic problems one by one, as the inefficiency of this or that part of the war machine is made plain, instead of attempting to face the whole problem of wartime economics in a planned and balanced way. For the first few months the emphasis was laid mainly on the urgent problem of munitions and equipment for the armed forces. Then attention shifted, under the impulse of the widespread evidence of falling exports, to the maintenance and extension of our foreign trade, as a means of paying for supplies of foodstuffs, raw materials, and finished munitions, and thus eking out our resources of foreign exchange and readily realisable overseas investments. After much pother, the Government was induced to take the export problem seriously, and to do something to deal with manufacturers who were disinclined to trouble about exports as long as they could fill their books with domestic orders. The word went forth that exports were of supreme importance; and this led directly to a demand for measures designed to cut down total expenditure on civilian consumption, in order to relieve more goods for overseas sale. Mr. Keynes found in this demand an opportunity of commanding attention for his projects—though not yet acceptance either by the Labour movement or by the Government, upon which the onus of decision falls.

And now, in the most recent phase of war-economics discussion, we find ourselves all talking about agriculture. In part, the Government has provoked the present chorus, by producing out of its hat a quite remarkably undersized rabbit of agricultural development; but more largely the discussion has been stimulated by the actual experience of rationing, and by the growing realisation that, on present evidences, the war is likely to be one of two things—long, or inconclusive.

From the standpoint of agricultural policy, the prospects of a long or of an inconclusive war carry to some extent the same moral. The longer the war lasts, the less can we be assured either of our ability to transport a very large part of our necessary food supply from overseas, or of our provision of the means of paying for so heavy a burden of imports. On the other hand, an inconclusive war will almost certainly mean a continued condition in Europe of military preparedness, with its totalitarian accompaniments of *autarkie*-worship and restricted foreign intercourse; and the maintenance of such conditions will be bound to drive us, whether we like it or not, to adapt our economic system both to a smaller dependence on imports and to a smaller reliance on the power of the British Navy and the British foreign investor to supply our needs.

Thus, the war situation powerfully reinforces the arguments of those who have been contending that we ought to make a great effort to increase largely our agricultural output and to arrest the persistent drift of population from the country to the towns. The Agricultural Marketing Acts, and the other numerous measures which in recent years have helped the farmers either by subsidies or by enabling them to raise artificially the prices of their goods, have indeed been evoked with this object in view. But, though the consumer has often been given—in the cases of milk and bacon, for example—ample grounds for complaint, all these stimuli have been plainly inadequate either to check the fall in the rural population or to bring about any really considerable increase in the volume of agricultural output.

It is plainly useless to proceed further along the lines hitherto followed. In war or in peace, if we are to expand greatly our agricultural production, we must take drastic steps to ensure that it is produced as cheaply as possible. For the majority of agricultural products, home costs are bound, at any rate for some time to come, to be well above world costs, or rather above import prices in a free market—unless indeed the prices at which we are able to sell our exports fall so sharply as substantially to alter the barter terms of trade. To some extent, this is certain to happen in the course of the present export drive; for we can push our exports only by reducing their relative prices to potential buyers. But it is unlikely to happen enough to make it really economic to expand home food production to any great extent unless we also take every possible step to cut down our farming and marketing costs. The Marketing Acts and the Government's other measures for helping agriculture have so far—except the subsidies for ploughing up grassland and for the provision of fertilisers—made little or no contribution to the reduction of costs; they have been designed to raise prices, and not to reduce expenses. But we cannot without disaster to our standards of living grow more of our food and also charge more for it; cheaper production and marketing are necessary conditions of greater dependence on home-grown food.

Is a policy of rapidly increasing food production compatible with the retention of private landlordism? If costs are to be cut, wide areas of land must be brought under unified policies of development. Capital must be forthcoming where it is needed and, in view of the shortage of capital in face of war demands, must be made to go as far as possible. The State must be put in a position in which it can help the farmer to greater efficiency without making the landlord a present of much of the increased return, and without giving the farmer freedom to exploit the public or plan his output regardless of material needs. Public ownership of all agricultural land, with public supply of capital for needed development, suggests itself as the plainly sensible solution, not for some hypothetical period of post-war reconstruction, but here and now.

This is not to say that, given every practicable increase in the efficiency of production and marketing, Great Britain could reasonably aim at anything like agricultural self-sufficiency. Increased agricultural output and increased industrial exports become conflicting aims only at the point at which a real deficiency of man-power and other resources makes its appearance. The claims upon shipping space have to be weighed carefully against the claims on foreign exchange when we are considering such a matter as the encouragement of pig-breeding. Imported feeding stuffs cost much less than imported bacon; but they take up much more room. Pigs fed on farm waste at home use up neither shipping space nor foreign exchange; but that method is not open to the specialised large-scale pig-farmer. Anything we can do to encourage pig-breeding as a by-industry of mixed farming is all gain; beyond that, the balance has to be struck by comparing the relative scarcities of money and cargo-space.

Every decision on farming policy to-day raises nice questions which concern the Treasury and the Ministry of Shipping as well as the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, and involves a careful balancing of advantages and disadvantages. It can, however, be said confidently that, even if there will come a point at which the desirability of expanding further agricultural production will be outweighed by other considerations, we have not yet nearly reached that point; and accordingly the enthusiasm of the agrarian advocates is for the present all to the good, provided they realise that the one thing we plainly cannot afford to do is to bribe the farmers into producing more, and the landlords into improving the land, by ever-increasing prices or by subsidies which have, from the producer's standpoint, an equivalent effect. It is an essential aim of our policy to keep down the cost of living, and so prevent a " vicious spiral "; and that means that agricultural costs must be lowered by improving the efficiency of production and marketing.

In any event, increased agricultural output cannot be had without a considerable time-lag; and therefore we must do all we can, while we are waiting for it, to increase our exports in order to pay for imported supplies. There is so far as we have seen no clash between these policies, because the available man-power is as yet nothing like fully employed. The clash will come later, as the armed forces drain away more labour and the pressure of civilian demand becomes more insistent in face of real shortage. That makes it the more important to do all we can do quickly, while there are still reserves of man-power ready to be used. The Government ought to be pressing on with the double task, and at the same time working out ahead a policy for the time when the clash of forces does come. That it has done this, or is doing it, we see no sign, though such men as Sir Arthur Salter, who had to face the same complex problem in the last war, must be well aware of the need. It is to be hoped, now that the problem of exports does seem at last to be tolerably well in hand, Mr. Lloyd George will succeed in galvanising the Government into a burst of activity on the agricultural front, and that he will even be able to persuade it that the root of the matter is not to offer the farmer and the landlord higher prices, but to strain every nerve to the cutting out of unnecessary costs and to the improvement of the productive capacity of the land.

THE CANADIAN ELECTION

It is unnecessary to find complicated explanations for the Canadian General Election. The date of an election in Canada is determined primarily by the factor which determines the date of an election in Britain, the belief of the Prime Minister that it is the date most likely to give him a majority. Mr. Mackenzie King may not be a great statesman, but he is an astute politician, and obviously he believed that an election now would give his party another four or five years of office. Had there been no war, it would have been necessary to dissolve this year and, indeed, an election has been expected since the King and Queen returned from Canada in July. The complaint of the Conservative party that the wooing of the electors is "very sudden" is as much tactics as the dissolution itself. They have taken the cue that they must try to show that the Liberals are unpatriotic to dissolve in wartime, because patriotism is a part of the Conservatives' stock-in-trade which is particularly attractive in time of war.

It is true that Sir Robert Borden's Government of 1911 secured from the British Parliament power to prolong the Parliament of 1911 until October, 1917, a year longer than the British North America Act provides. But an election then took place in wartime. Moreover, the fact that it would be necessary to secure legislation in Westminster is in itself a reason for not asking for it. That Canada cannot amend her own Constitution, even for the purpose of prolonging a Parliament, is one of the bones of contention. Normally, the Conservatives do not complain of constitutional links with Great Britain, but Canadian politics really are politics, and any stick would be good enough to beat a Government. In this case, indeed, the stick would also be wielded by people in the Prime Minister's own party. A large section of Canadian opinion is very critical of any dependence on Great Britain—hence, for instance, the pretence that Canada declared war, in spite of the opinion of all the lawyers that Canada was at war when the British proclamation was issued.

Further, the Prime Minister is stronger now than he is likely to be at the end of another year. There are two periods during a war when a Government, in Canada as in Great Britain, is strongest. The first is immediately after the outbreak, when the feeling that national unity is necessary is predominant. The other is immediately after the war has been won. If Mr. Mackenzie King can cash in now, then probably he can cash in again when the war is over. If he waits for another year war-weariness and complaints about inefficiency will necessarily increase. In Canada, patronage in the form of jobs and contracts plays a very important political role. The rapid change to a war economy gives ample scope for both. Active politicians, not only in Ottawa itself but also in every constituency, will be hoping for lucrative appointments. Industries will be hoping for Government contracts. As the famous Duke of Newcastle found, it is hope and not fulfilment that creates loyalty. If the Government stays in for another year the disappointed will become the disaffected. Even the farmers, the most disaffected element in Canada, can look forward with hope. A large Government subsidy last year enabled the wheat-growers to receive 80 cents for No. 1 Hard at Fort William, with corresponding prices for other qualities. This year they can look forward to wheat at a dollar a bushel, and many of them will remember that in the last war wheat went up to two dollars. Owners of pigs know that the whole output of bacon has already been taken by the British Government, and most other primary producers expect to gain by the war. Some of these hopes may not be fulfilled, and lack of shipping and import restrictions in Europe will certainly injure some exporting industries. The lumber industries of the East and of the West are certain to be badly hit, and the fruit-growers will find conditions difficult.

Prospects for the Liberal party are therefore bright. If the war had not broken out it is probable that they would have lost most of Quebec, which is always the key Province. The *Union Nationale* seemed to be firmly entrenched, and the Duplessis Government would probably have lent its considerable influence against the Dominion Government. Now the war has destroyed it, and it seems likely that most of Quebec will again vote Liberal. The resolution of the Ontario Legislature, alleging incompetence by the Dominion Government in the prosecution of the war, is the main excuse given by Mr. King for the present dissolution. The Ontario Government is theoretically Liberal, and the conflict between Mr. King and "Mitch" Hepburn, the Premier of Ontario, is largely personal. Mr. Hepburn is at least as astute a politician as Mr. King. The parties are organised on a federal basis, so that his influence is necessary to the Liberal party in Ontario. His control over the Liberal vote in the Province has hitherto been complete. He has an excellent organisation and carries the substantial French-Canadian vote, which is especially strong in Northern Ontario. His "unnatural coalition" with Mr. Duplessis has not survived the outbreak of war, but there is no evidence that his control in Ontario has been weakened. It is now almost too late for the usual pre-election "deal" between Ottawa and Toronto, and it seems probable that Ontario will elect more Conservatives than in 1935. Opposition to Mr. Hepburn will be opposition to Mr. King, but it is by no means certain that friends of Mr. Hepburn will be friends of Mr. King.

Nova Scotia has been a depressed area, but the war has revived Halifax and it may be assumed that, as in 1935, the Province will be solidly Liberal. An Englishman dare not speak of the incomprehensible politics of New Brunswick, but there patronage seems to be the predominating factor, and there is no reason why it should not be as predominantly Liberal as in 1935. Prince Edward Island has only four seats; but as the prevalence of skunks, which seems to be the major political problem, will not be affected by the war, there is no reason why the Liberals should not get the votes. On the whole, therefore, Mr. King should retain his support in the Maritime Provinces.

The results in the West depend on different factors. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation was increasing its power before the outbreak of war. It was never strong, because the American organisation of the trade unions prevented it from obtaining the support of organised labour. The American reaction against "reds" may reduce its influence, even in British Columbia. Moreover, it appears to be divided on the issue of the war even more than the British Labour movement. Whether the gains will go to the Liberals or to the Conservatives depends, however, on the unpredictable results of three-cornered fights.

Finally, there is Mr. Aberhart and the Social Credit Movement in Alberta and Saskatchewan. They throve on the agrarian discontent which may be removed by wheat at a dollar or more. In Saskatchewan they may lose heavily. In Alberta, on the other hand, they are more than the echo of the farmers' grumbles. Mr. Aberhart has a very good organisation, and the war will neither interrupt his Bible readings nor destroy his patronage. Nor are his polyglot supporters remarkably pro-British. Moreover, he seems to have decided to confuse the issue by holding a Provincial election at the same time, and war does not make the bankers more popular. It may be that some seats will be lost. If Quebec can turn out Mr. Duplessis, Alberta can turn out even Mr. Aberhart. The farmers might vote for Mr. King, however, if they thought that it would mean the difference between wheat at a dollar and wheat at a dollar and a half.

It seems, therefore, that the calculations of Mr. King and his party organisers are likely to be correct. They will certainly do far better than they would have done if there had been no war. Dr. Manion has made no great impression on the Liberal vote, and the C.C.F., the Social Creditors and Mr. Herridge's private party are but fragments. A Government in power and likely to stay in power can secure the enthusiastic collaboration of thousands of party workers who believe that enthusiasm is not its own reward. There is, too, the immense advantage of the patriotic appeal, which this time is not the private possession of the Conservative party but has been appropriated by Mr. King.

W. IVOR JENNINGS

A LONDON DIARY

FOR once I agree with Lord Beaverbrook. The proposal to double the butter ration, simply because the poor cannot afford to buy butter at the present price, seems to me to condemn our whole system of rationing. Here we are after six months of war, exhorted by ministers to cut consumption, and actually the wealthier classes can eat all they please, while consumption of milk, butter and bacon declines among the poor. When I said this to a doctor friend, he replied that the Ministry of Health actually has the machinery for ensuring an iron ration to the poor. The scheme for distributing milk below cost price to mothers and children under five—the organisation and cost are left to the local authorities—is already approved. But only one town in the whole country has put it into practice. At Chester an enlightened council allows 8*d.* a gallon to the distributors and ensures to the poorest mothers and children milk at prices they can afford, varying from 2*d.* a pint to nothing at all. Why, my friend asked, cannot Local Authorities deal in the same way with the surplus butter and bacon? If people are not buying their ration's worth, the Council could buy up everything which is over at the end of each week and sell it, as they sell milk, below cost price to an approved list of persons, to unemployed, soldier's wives, etc. This would at least stop the ridiculous position in which a shopkeeper was fined £50 for selling surplus butter. When the shopkeeper inquired in court what he should have done with it, the answer given was "Bury it, of course."

* * *

In our *That Germany* column this week appears a laconic and entirely appalling quotation from a German paper about the marriage laws in German Poland. Strictly applied they would mean the total extinction of the Poles and of Polish Jews. Allowing for all exaggeration and for the impossibility of completely carrying through such a policy, I am driven to believe that something not far short of this is really contemplated. There is much to confirm this from other sources. While the Jews are confined to a kind of large concentration camp, which cannot provide them with a living, in Western Poland young Poles are being shot, elderly people are being thrown out into the countryside to starve to death, and many of the Polish girls are being sterilised and herded into brothels. I hear indirectly that some German officers are utterly ashamed and aghast at what is being done in their country's name. They themselves have to watch helpless; the whole affair is in the hands of the S.S. and Himmler, who is amongst all the Nazi leaders the most fanatical and ruthless believer in the German racial theory. It is clear that if the war goes on the Germans do not mean there to be any Poland to restore at the end of it.

* * *

Though fascinating pictures have appeared here of the enthronement of the Delai Lama in Tibet, I have had to go to the American press for any appraisal of the significance of this extraordinary ceremony. The last Delai Lama died in 1933. He is reincarnated in a child who is born at the moment of his death. I am not sure that the officiating Lamas let the world know very clearly when this moment is, and there is certainly a good deal of doubt about the coincidence of the birth of the child finally chosen. In a word, there is a splendid opportunity for ecclesiastical and political intrigue in the choosing of the baby. It is even stated in one paper that the new Lama is more than a year too young! According to tradition, lots should be drawn amongst the children born at the identical moment. This feature was dispensed with in the case of the present Lama and a formal telegram sent to the Chinese Government, the nominal suzerain of Tibet, asking for permission to dispense with the lot drawing. As the war in the Far East has pushed the Chinese Government westwards, the actual influence of China in Tibet has grown, and on this occasion the Chungking Government sent a representative to sponsor the enthronement of the new little Lama, who is, according to his portraits and newspaper accounts, an astonishingly self-possessed and dignified baby. That he is also an ordinary child rather than a god is suggested by his reception of the presents brought by the British Mission. The British Mission was headed by Mr. B. J. Gould, who is a military officer of Sikkim, the British Protectorate adjacent to Tibet. He too, I gather, has had something to do with the choosing of the new Lama. The British have regarded Tibet as their actual sphere of influence for the last generation, and in spite of efforts by the U.S.S.R. and Japan, Britain is still the dominant Power. The British representative presented a toy automobile and a cuckoo clock to the new Lama, who immediately called his eight-year-old brother to show him how they worked. After that, to quote the *New York Herald Tribune*:

> With his head shaved, wearing a monk's dress and sitting cross-legged on his high throne, with five abbots standing by, the lad laid his hands on the foreheads of each of the British Mission and presented silk scarves, which his chief ecclesiastical officer placed round the necks of Gould and his companions.

An adaptation of an ancient ceremony in the modern world is always a fascinating spectacle, and I should have liked to be present at this minor triumph of British diplomacy, which is also, I am happy to say, a triumph for the Chinese.

* * *

Mr. Lees-Smith's incautious attack on the herd-spirit of the Public School, in which his sons are being educated, has once more revived the debate on the future of the Public Schools. This is one of those subjects like blood-sports, which excite more passion than reasoned discussion. The day school *versus* boarding school controversy gets muddled up with disputes about the value of the classics and class education. Moreover, few take the trouble to define what exactly they mean by a Public School. The result is that neither the defenders nor the attackers have any clear policy and yet another urgent problem is left untackled. I myself have always felt that you cannot tackle the Public Schools until you have decided what to do with the prep. schools. It is no good even considering the "nationalisation" of Eton or Repton, while their entrance age (12-14) is different from the age at which children pass from the elementary to the central or secondary school. If you want a coherent plan of democratic education, your first job is to achieve a uniform plan and leaving age for elementary education, whether public or private. It is equally silly to suggest turning the Public School into ordinary secondary schools or grammar schools. Many of them are in the heart of the country, where there just are not enough pupils about. On the other side, Public School masters who suggest you can democratise Rugby or Charterhouse by providing 10 per cent, of free places are talking equal nonsense. Ten per cent. of free scholars will make no difference to the tone of a school, and any percentage which would will be vigorously opposed. I myself believe in the boarding school between certain ages, say 12-15½, when the gang spirit is both natural and strong, and for short periods, and should like to see two experiments tried with the next two Public Schools which get into difficulties. Take over the first of them and turn it into a " country school " where boys from a nearby industrial district go for six months schooling. Take over the second, nearer a town and turn it into a glorified " Tech," a junior university for boys and girls from 16 to 18, or (now that conscription breaks up normal university education) from 16 to 20. At 16 children should be growing out of the " gangster-stage " and becoming individuals. Keeping them at boarding school or even at a good grammar school often retards this growth and produces the arrested development for which we are notorious. This type of intermediate university would, I think, be good education and, it if had 50 per cent. free places, good democracy. Democratise at both ends, elementary and university, and the middle can take care of itself.

* * *

I like this account from Tokio (quoted in the American press) of an incident in the Japanese Parliament:

> Interpellating the budget committee in the Lower House yesterday, Haruji Tahara, of the Social Mass party, shouted: " In times like these, a strong political system is needed to enforce strong policies. We must have a strong hand at the top, such as Hitler, Mussolini——" The speaker paused.
>
> At this point, the members of the committee and the Government gasped, recalling that Suehiro Nishio was expelled from the Lower House a year ago because he added Stalin to the list of strong men after whom Japan should pattern her system.
>
> " —or Roosevelt," concluded Tahara, to everyone's intense relief. The assembly burst into laughter, according to the newspaper *Nichi Nichi.*

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to L. J. Wyard.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Sir Charles Allom told of the trouble at the Ministry of Supply:

" I'd just like to get my hands on certain people," he said. " It's scandalous and foul to think that ordinary business matters get distorted by a damn lot of Socialists."—*Daily Mirror.*

John Burke, 33, shoe repairer, of Euston Road, N.W., was committed for trial on a charge of burglariously breaking and entering the flat of Mr. Archibald Brunton, at St. Stephen's Gardens, Kensington, with intent to commit a felony.

Burke said: " I am sorry for the inconvenience I caused these people by getting them out of bed; I thought they were out."—*Evening Standard.*

The moment Mr. Stanley uttered the words " unmarried wife " a quiver of excitement ran through the House.—*Daily Mail.*

Now, mention Europe to Anthony Eden, and a look of polite but quite genuine lack of interest comes into his eyes.—*Sunday Times.*

The Chief Officer of Eton Fire Brigade has sent this SOS to Eton Urban Council:

> The A.F.S. men who have served full time since the outbreak of war require new trousers, and I recommend that they be purchased before the situation becomes serious.

The Council agreed unanimously to grant the request.—*Evening News.*

The Dean's sermon in Westminster Abbey, in which he was reported to have said that " Communism has recovered the essential form of the real belief in God which organised Christianity as it is now has so largely lost," was felt to be ambiguous for a highly paid Church dignitary and a follower of Christ.—Senior Canon J. M. C. Crum, in the *Daily Telegraph.*

And, just as Joan of Arc was canonised as a saint years after she was burnt as a witch, so the *Evening Standard* leading articles, rejected in their generation, will be resurrected and adored by the Macaulays and Gibbons of countless centuries to come.—Leading article in *Evening Standard.*

THAT GERMANY

Marriage Laws in German Poland

The Evangelical Consistory in Poland has brought the following official decrees to the notice of the Evangelical-Augsburg churches: (*a*) Marriages between German nationals will take place according to the regulations of the Nürnberg Laws. Both parties must be of German or kindred blood and racially pure. . . . (*b*) Marriages between Jews will not take place. (*c*) Marriages between Poles are forbidden until further notice. (*d*) Marriages between Germans and Poles are absolutely forbidden. *Baseler Nachrichten.* 11.3.40.

The Position in Finland

M. Daladier and Mr. Chamberlain are faced by a defeat so great that one can only approximately sketch the consequences and results which the end of the Soviet-Finnish War will bring. The Finnish State gave proof of its own strength and iron will in three and a half months of war; but the Soviet Union, as befits a great power, has won the position *vis à vis* Finland which belongs to it in the whole of Eastern Europe from Murmansk to the Black Sea. England has once again been driven out of Eastern Europe back to its island and must from this vulnerable point face the rest of the decisive battle. Thanks to a better insight and thanks also to the lesson which Polish campaign taught to all people who rely on the help and power of Britain, Finland recognised the hollowness of British promises and the ineffectiveness of British support. In this attitude she was clearly supported by other members of the Nordic peoples which were exposed to the blackmailing policy of Great Britain.

National Zeitung, Essen. 13.3.40.

The Daily Herald

The change in the editorship of the *Daily Herald* has a special interest because of its political background which is disclosed in a contribution in the last number of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION by Francis Williams. According to him the Jewish magnate gave very precise instructions to the Socialist editor. One could imagine of what type these inroads of the millionaire Jew were. . . . The Jew dictates: the English journalist possesses freedom—to offer his resignation. That is what one calls freedom of the press on the other side of the Channel. *Völkischer Beobachter.* 7.3.40.

Germany's Monroe Doctrine

For the first time since the visit of the American Under-Secretary, Sumner Welles, in Berlin, a semi-official source—the agency *Dienst aus Deutschland*, which is in close relation with the Wilhelmstrasse—has stated with some precision the German demands . . . " Germany demands "—these are the actual words—" what America already in the last century and as a result of the last war did for its own waters and its own trade." Disarmament after this war must include the fleets. The English strong points, which have proved themselves the pillar of English maritime supremacy and which are built in all cases on non-British soil, must be removed.

Baseler National Zeitung. 7.3.40.

An Appreciation of Molotov

Toughness was always one of his strongest characteristics. This is equally true of his foreign policy to-day and of his personal career. . . There is no quality so typical of Molotov as his unconditional loyalty to Stalin. He has, it is said, a deeply sensitive nature. He has the character more of a worker than of a dazzling politician. In his case still waters run deep. *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten.* 9.3.40.

An Attack on Sir Nevile Henderson

The last British Ambassador in Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson, as was proved in his contributions to the English Blue Book, was a colossal failure in Berlin. He was given his post with the object of improving the relations between Britain and Germany but showed himself incapable of getting his way against the warmongering intriguers in the London Foreign Office. It is typical of his weak character that he does not now withdraw with dignity and pride but throws himself on the neck of those who fought him bitterly right up to the outbreak of war . . . . Only a few days before the war, this wonderful ambassador had given his German friends some excellent advice: to delay any action against the Polish terror for two months; for then they could have the whole of Poland for nothing, without anybody in England stirring a finger. One cannot help asking the question what rake-off Sir Nevile Henderson gets from the articles which the *Daily Herald* hopes will have a sensational success.

Völkischer Beobachter. 5.3.40.

A Musical Entente

For the first time for 25 years *Zar und Zimmermann* has been presented in the Soviet Union. The production took place in the town of Swerdlowsk. Lortzing's opera received the title of *Peter I in Saardam.* The Swerdlowsk papers devoted on the occasion of the production a long article on German music in which in particular Richard Wagner was celebrated as the German Titan. The Leningrad opera is now following the example of the Moscow opera which is due to produce the *Walküre* in April. Leningrad has now announced of a series of Wagner operas and Wagner concerts.

Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung. 9.3.40.

GOOD MEN AND SMART ALECS

We still pay too little attention to Napoleon's warning that nothing counts but the power of the idea and the power of the sword, and that in the end the idea will win. As far as ideas are concerned this war is a struggle between the old non-moral ideas of France and Britain, and the new immoral ideas of Germany. It is hard to say which of these better equips the combatant for ultimate victory. But if we mean to win in the realm of ideas—(which is the only alternative to year after year of war, million upon million of dead, and another peace founded upon hate)—then it is high time that we put ourselves in a position to oppose the new immoral ideas of Germany by newer and positively moral ideas from Britain and France.

I have suggested elsewhere that in a world based on the highest standards of morality of which man is now capable we would find at least three things. Common ownership of all the productive resources of the community; complete economic freedom for India and all Colonial possessions; the abolition of all national armed forces and the substitution of one international force in which the common soldiers of each participating country would meet each other as colleagues in every battalion and every ship.

Some of the older and more experienced politicians with whom I used to work and struggle for collective security while that policy might still have prevented war, tell me that my ideas are much too moral and cannot hope to succeed. It may be, of course, that they say this because they are more experienced. But it is just possible that they say it because they have not correctly analysed the struggle which to-day we call politics.

They assume, I believe, that politics is a co-operative struggle in which all men do their best to overcome the dead weight of "events," of "world forces," and of "nature." Surely they are mistaken. Politics is not a struggle of all men *versus* "nature." It is a struggle between some men and some other men.

Karl Marx and his interpreters have been inaccurate in presenting the struggle as one between all the good poor working men and all the wicked men with incomes over three pounds a week. Three broad types can be discerned. These may be called the Ordinary Men, the Smart Alecs, and the Leaders of Good.

The Ordinary Men, both rich and poor, want to lead a quiet life and do an ordinary job of work for whatever reward may seem appropriate to their fellow men in return for the services which they render to the community.

The Smart Alecs do not give a damn for the community. They want more than their share of money and power without making any contribution in return. These are the men who buy an invention for a song and sell it for half a million; they rig the exchanges, they corner wheat, they know a man at the Ministry who can fix a job, they bribe officials for advance information about the route of a new by-pass; and in their most highly developed form they impose their wills on whole nations for the purpose of extending, not the national power, but their own power.

The Leaders of Good, scattered through all the political parties, the churches, the Toc H clubs, the hospitals, and other organisations innumerable, give their lives in struggling to create the conditions in which the Ordinary Man can live his life in quiet decency, freed from the menace of the Smart Alecs.

But largely because the Leaders of Good visualise their struggle as a co-operative struggle of all men *versus* nature they wrongly suppose that in all circumstances a small objective can be more easily achieved than a great. In certain circumstances they may be right. But bearing in mind that we can only hope to escape from unimaginable destruction and sacrifice if we can do something which will impress itself on the minds of the German people, I submit that to-day they are mistaken.

Consider the matter in this way. The Leaders of Good decide to advocate something which is 50 per cent. good. They are delighted when a number of Smart Alecs come in and subscribe to their funds. "Look," they say, "we are converting them." The Leaders of Good hope and intend of course that when they have made a beginning they will be able to advance from 50 per cent. good to 60 per cent., 70 per cent., and ultimately 100 per cent. The Smart Alecs have other intentions. Because they know that what is 50 per cent. good is, *a priori*, 50 per cent. bad, they co-operate gladly on this 50–50 basis. Public opinion is roused by a mighty propaganda campaign. The victory is won for 50–50, and the Ordinary Men rather naturally feel that they have done their bit and may retire into private life leaving the Leaders of Good to look after their interests.

It is only at this stage that the real conflict begins. The Leaders of Good try to press on for 55 per cent. good. The Smart Alecs begin to wangle for 55 per cent. evil. The Smart Alecs have an almost unopposed walkover. They are alert; they are in touch with each other all over the world by the very nature of their daily business; they can spot the moves of the Leaders of Good who must of necessity work in the open; they know precisely when to buy up a string of newspapers, what lower instincts of human nature to appeal to and when, what politician is worth bribing; they know too which government is led by men sincerely intent on good and in which capital therefore it is worth while to start a run on the exchange. Against this concentrated power, the Leaders of Good are wholly un-united, are not in touch with each other, do not know what their adversary is doing, and in most cases after the real battle has been already lost they will have to try to re-arouse the Ordinary Men on the issue between 55 per cent. good and 55 per cent. evil. The difference is too small, and the next battle is between those who try to push on to 60 per cent. evil and those who try to struggle back to 50 per cent. good.

What matters then to the Leaders of Good is not merely the size of the objective they aim at, but its size in relation to the volume of enthusiasm and support for that objective which they can awaken and, more important, maintain, among the Ordinary Men.

In order to arouse this enthusiasm and in order to make sure that the Smart Alecs at the end of it all do not win, as Hitler used to claim he could always win, "by a twist," the Leaders of Good should not propose what is partially moral. They should propose what is wholly moral. It is for this that they can arouse the greatest enthusiasm in our people to-day. It is for this that they can win the support not indeed of neutral Smart Alecs, but of neutral peoples. Above all, it is only for something wholly new, wholly moral, that we can hope to persuade the German people to bring this war to an early end.

RICHARD ACLAND

HOLIDAYS

Many thousands of Nottinghamshire miners, it is reported, have decided to work during the holidays in order that the public may not go short of coal. One writer, after expressing his admiration of the miners' unselfishness, raises the question whether it would be a good or a bad thing if their example were generally followed. Holidays, he thinks, have become so necessary to the health of the modern man and woman that a nation that sacrificed them might prove after a time to have lost rather than gained in its efficiency.

It is certainly not easy to imagine a contented country in which none of the inhabitants ever had a holiday. The ordinary man, even though he takes pleasure in his work, cannot help looking on it as a form of servitude and welcomes every break from it. I have heard business men grumbling over the Christmas holiday and expressing a longing to be back in their offices again, but that was because they were expected to spend the holiday in the bosom of the family and they regarded spending a day or two in the bosom of the family as an even worse form of servitude than sitting in an office giving orders to their subordinates. There used also to be many small shopkeepers who loved to work seven days a week and resented any suggestion that they should close their shops either on the weekly half-holiday or on Sunday. This may have been because they loved making money even more than making holiday; but I suspect there have always been men and women who had a passion for work for its own sake.

We are accustomed to think of the modern age as pre-eminently the age of holidays. Not only are there Sundays free from work and the Bank Holidays introduced in the nineteenth century, but the weekly half-holiday has become almost universal and paid holidays have become more and more general. The older men in the villages smile at the legalised idleness of modern youth. They boast of having lived in a time when Saturday was the same as any other week-day and they were all the robuster for doing a full day's work on it instead of playing cricket like their degenerate grandsons. At least, some of them do when in a mood to air their superiority to those who have come after them. They take it for granted that never before was such leisure enjoyed as is enjoyed by one and all at the present day.

In point of fact, however, we moderns have been born not into an age of leisure but into an age of work. Modern civilisation, if it is right to call it so, had made away with most of our holidays before it created new ones for us. "In catholic times," says *Chambers' Encyclopedia*, "holidays were numerous; but modern legislation and custom have considerably reduced their number." How long it will be before we get back to the high standard of the Middle Ages in holiday-making it is impossible to foretell; but until we have done so we shall have no right to plume ourselves on living in an unprecedented age of leisure.

And even the Middle Ages were hopelessly industrious in comparison with other ages that preceded them, if we can take the word of a lady who some time ago wrote a rather lyrical description of what she called "the playdays of humanity." "Man," she wrote, "was once as free as the birds. He jumped and danced and shouted as his instincts prompted. He slept when the sun made him drowsy and ate when he found his food. He laughed at the dancing moonbeams. He beat his breast in proud defiance of the rain. He jumped in glee from stone to stone, rocked wildly from the limb of a tree, gave animal vent to the instincts and impulses that crowded through him. So, short and happy, went the span of his life. Then came civilisation."

When I read this account of my ancestors doing their best to enjoy a life of perpetual holiday I could not help congratulating myself on the fact that I was one of their descendants and not one of themselves. "Then came civilisation." What a blessed relief it must have been, providing them with the possibility of escape from a life in which there was nothing else to do but laugh at the dancing moonbeams or beat one's breast in proud defiance of the rain! After all, if we thought highly of laughing at the dancing moonbeams as a recreation we should be found indulging in it more frequently on the banks of the Thames during the black-out. As for beating one's breast in proud defiance of the rain, one can do that, if one wishes, at Brighton or Bournemouth. The more one reads of the first age of leisure, indeed, the more clearly one realises that it did not know how to enjoy its leisure. To jump in glee from stone to stone and to rock wildly from the limb of a tree is all very well for children; but who would subscribe several guineas a year for the privilege of taking part in such sports? Men took to playing golf because they found that it was a better game than jumping from stone to stone or any other of the holiday employments of their distant ancestors.

Yet the lady who wrote the description I have quoted of the playdays of humanity maintained that our passion for holidays is the outcome of a longing to return to our forefathers' ways. "Man stifled his natural instincts," she wrote, "and walked silent with the masses. But beneath the smoothness that is civilisation there smoulders a great unrest. Man longs for the freedom that once was his. Sometimes, while civilisation still was young, that longing became intense and mass madness resulted. The many trampled on the few. And the few, being wise, created holidays."

It is possible that there is some truth in this. One can imagine primitive man leaving the limb on the tree from which he was wildly swinging in order to throw hard balls at coconuts on Hampstead Heath and not noticing much fundamental difference between the pleasures of his own and those of the modern world. The swings, again, might seem to him to be merely slight improvements on the trees of his native Eden. At the same time, I think, as he mounted his horse on the steam roundabout, he would admit that the world had progressed. "These moderns," he would say to himself, "have discovered how to enjoy themselves. We poor savages were simpletons in comparison."

And there is another good reason for not envying primitive man his perpetual play-day. As all his life was a holiday, he tasted none of the delights of contrast such as the modern worker feels on waking up into a world in which he can be idle till bedtime. To him Sunday was no different from any other day. Easter Monday he did not look forward to with any excitement, since for him it was a sort of Easter Monday all the year round.

Work is sometimes regarded as a curse laid upon man, but I doubt whether without the compulsion of work he would get half as much pleasure from his holidays. The delight of ceasing to work is a bliss known only to the worker. The schoolboy knows it as the bell rings that gives him his liberty. The shipyard worker knows it half-way through Saturday. The clergyman knows it as he ceases to do his duty for a whole month in summer. Judges, lawyers, doctors and civil servants —few of them are ever so happy as at the moment when they renounce the work they were sent into the world to do and set off for a month or more to emulate the freedom, if not the way of life, of primitive man.

Whether holidays are necessary to our health or not, I do not know. I had no summer holiday last year, since, just as I was about to leave for a month in Scotland, war broke out; and I cannot be sure whether I am more of a wreck than usual in consequence. At the same time, there is no doubt that, after the first fortnight or so, one begins to have a curious sense of well-being on a holiday. For the first week, unless one has been at pains to keep fit during the rest of the year, one is more conscious of weariness than of well-being. Muscles unaccustomed to exercise resent the labours of the golf-course. The constant desire to be in the fresh air leads to an exhausting surfeit of fresh air and sunshine. And, if one spends the holiday in foreign cities, the perpetual tramping round churches and picture galleries make the limbs weary and the cheeks grow pale. In the words of a Harley Street doctor, recommending a cure, however, "you have to get worse before you get better," and when once you have become inured to a holiday, I am convinced that it begins to do you good both in body and in mind. By the third week you feel that you are a new man and wish you were a millionaire so that the holiday might last for ever.

I confess I look forward even to the brief holiday of an early Easter; but then I do not intend to take any exercise. Having had only one week-end in the country in the past four months, I shall find all the novelty I need in the small space that is bounded on the north by the grocer's shop across the green, and on the south by the village inn. I shall be content if I hear a chaffinch singing in the garden and an owl hooting in the moonlight. But what I shall chiefly try to do, after I have read the papers and listened to the news on the wireless, is nothing. There is nothing better than nothing as an occupation for a holiday—at least, after one has grown old enough to enjoy doing nothing. It will be better for me, I am sure, than wildly rocking from the limb of a tree, and it will be more dignified. And how I shall be wishing I were a millionaire by Tuesday morning!

Y. Y.

THE SUITS OF WOE

"The people of this country are united with sympathy for the situation in which they find themselves, and in admiration for the courage with which they have maintained for so long in the struggle against overwhelming odds. This epic story . . . will remain alive in the memory of all people."—*Prime Minister on Finland, March 13th.*

The hour brings forth the man. This iron time
Which tolls the knell of nation after nation,
Demands, as victims of each murderous crime
Are shuffled off to hasty inhumation,
A master of the simple yet sublime
To standardise the funeral oration,
And in this species of non-stop recital
The world yields Chamberlain unchallenged title.

As to their rest the gashed remains are borne,
Securely nailed inside the flag-draped coffin,
His graveside tributes to all those that mourn
The sharpness of bereavement needs must soften.
The weeds of woe were never better worn—
The trouble is, he wears them much too often
And sometimes spreads consolatory unction
At a not strictly necessary function.

When one in so commanding a position
Shows such obituary eloquence
There comes a moment in the repetition
When there must burst upon the dullest sense
A wild but uncontrollable suspicion
It may not all be pure coincidence,
But Fate mows down these nations small and gallant
To exercise an elegiac talent.

From which there follows, none knows why or how
Upon these obsequies, the firm conviction
That we should not perpetually endow
This hoary mourner, this confirmed affliction
Whose term of office has been up to now,
Despite his own unjustified prediction
And notwithstanding pacts of mutual amity,
A chronicle of unrelieved calamity.

No man is ever England's Premier named
Without some attribute of highest order,
Then how shall Mr. Chamberlain be famed
By history, time's impartial recorder,
Who for so long memorially framed
His era in a double mourning border—
As stern War Minister? or blest peacemaker?
Or just a universal undertaker?

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

COUSIN MURIEL

THE first thing to say is that Miss Clemence Dane's play *Cousin Muriel* is excellent entertainment. Few will have difficulty in forgetting themselves in the Globe Theatre while watching her characters living before their eyes; while the youthful charm of Miss Peggy Ashcroft as "Dinah" is sure of enchanting them. I would like to go again just for the sake of the lift her performance gives to the spirits. It tempts one to a digression.

Acting implies complete awareness of the means you are using to make a particular impression on others. Yet no actor or actress is perfect in a part until this self-consciousness has been transcended. It must be recoverable—since adjustments may have to be made—but something approximating to an impersonal attitude towards your own personality is necessary. Now, in playing parts in which success depends on conveying a charming impression of youthful candour and spontaneity, it is vitally important to transcend self-consciousness, while in such parts it is peculiarly difficult to do so. The actor or actress cannot help knowing that in behaving in a particular way, he or she is delighting the audience; though in the eyes of a sensitive spectator the real charm of such a part vanishes the moment any self-awareness creeps into the acting. It requires either a personal humility, rare in the histrionic temperament, or a most impersonal interest in the art of acting to forget yourself entirely in a charming part—perhaps it needs both. When we talk of an actor or actress becoming spoilt, we are nearly always thinking of the change in their acting due to their appropriating sympathy or admiration as tributes to their own personalities. At first this change may even improve their performance by increasing self-confidence, but soon or late it stultifies. They end by selecting parts (and interpreting them too) accordingly as those parts offer opportunities for recreating this flattering relation with the audience. Or if they do not do this on their own initiative, managers tempt them to do so. Miss Peggy Ashcroft plays this part with such delightful and unselfconscious naturalness that one trembles at the idea of that gift being exploited. If I had not seen her in *The White Guard* (a more complex part) I might have thought young love was her speciality.

But that is not all there is to this play—far from it. There is "Cousin Muriel" herself, an unusual character study, complex as a living person, and interpreted with a fine sense of all its implications by Miss Edith Evans—indeed, so much so that I gather from the close of the play having been altered that many people were as bewildered by Miss Edith Evans, in the sense of not knowing how much to like Muriel or detest her, condemn her or forgive her, as they would have been had they had to deal with a real Mrs. Meilhac herself. In this part that is, undoubtedly, a tribute to the art of the actress, but is it equally complimentary to that of the dramatist? Is it enough (it is certainly a great deal) to create a natural character in whom callousness or sympathy, treachery and affection, sense and childish irresponsibility are convincingly mingled? Or have we a right to make the further demand that the novelist or dramatist should also devise circumstances which will so expose that character that we shall be in no doubt how far she will go in villainy, if pushed? Of course, such a verdict must not be *thrust* upon us, but ought we not to be in possession of the data necessary to judgment? It is a point on which I think no ruling is possible; but in drama it is certainly *safer* to leave the audience knowing the worst or the best of the main character in a play. As it was we left the theatre (on the first night) in a state of mind, not unlike the disgusted bewilderment, that prompted Sir Hubert Sylvester (eminent Harley Street physician) to leave the room without a word in the middle of "Cousin Muriel's "—what shall we call them?—mocking admissions. That is a most remarkable speech and delivered with the sublest sense of character and situation.

The situation (the plot hitherto) is this: "Cousin Muriel" has been running the widowed Sir Hubert's house for some years—and extremely well as a paid housekeeper. She has been much more than that to him, and there is no doubt that she has put a devotion into her service which was prompted by love (at first) on her side, and recognised most gratefully and trustfully by him. In fact, she has made him a success and you can see that she is the sort of woman who might well give a man confidence in his career—give him that feeling of success which leads to it. Mr. Alec Guinness as Richard Meilhac puts a subtle fineness and convincing strength into one of those inarticulate parts which so often bore us. (He *looked* so happy, for instance, when his mother asked him what attracted him in Dinah and he tried vainly to express it).

Why should Sir Hubert oppose the marriage so violently? He tells Richard that he dreads his heredity: the late Mr. Meilac was a reckless speculator who put his head in a gas-oven. Then, he adds that he cannot forgive him for having come down again and again on his mother for large sums of money which he Sir Hubert had of course furnished. Richard denies he ever asked his mother for money; Sir Hubert is not convinced. But it is the truth. Sir Hubert discovers that not only had "Cousin Muriel" made these requests in Richard's name, but also that she had been in the habit of adding "ty" to cheques made out for nine and six pounds. The dramatic scene of her "confession" or "defence" begins by his silently handing her one such cheque, while she is playing the piano. She remarks quietly "So you have found it out," and begins her ingenious confused explanation. Presently, she discovers that she has been talking some minutes to an empty room. That is an extremely telling moment, and I think my colleague Mr. Agate was right in saying that it was upon her calm surprise or resigned indifference that the curtain ought to have fallen. In the first version this moment was succeeded by her arrest on a charge of shoplifting. That was a blunder and it has now been altered: Sir Hubert returns and pays her off with wages and £50. She will find no doubt another crow to pluck. Well, I should have preferred the silent curtain. The great merit of this play is that for the greater part of the time, suspense is centred on the young lovers. Will they marry? But that comparatively commonplace though when well presented always real interest, is skilfully used to present something more intriguing—Cousin Muriel's character.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

MUSIC, NEW AND OLD

IN spite of the flood of critical theorising which has been poured out in the press during the last hundred years and the almost despairing attempt during the present century made by conscientious critics, terrified at the responsibilities they had to assume, to find a canon independent of their own experience, criticism remains more or less where it was. That is to say that a critic is compelled—if he is genuine—to rely upon his own knowledge and experience and to take the sole responsibility of a personal judgment.

I have always maintained that such a judgment can be less subjective than it seems, for I am one of the upholders of absolute standards. I do not see how one can be anything else, since to think otherwise would mean that everybody would be living in a wholly individual universe that had no relation to anybody else's. Relativity means nothing without reference to an absolute but the mistakes come in when we rashly define what that absolute is. That is why rules and canons lead to such errors of judgment.

I am moved to make these remarks by reading various critiques written by my colleagues of a new work by the Russian composer Prokoviev, played for the first time in England last Saturday afternoon under Dr. Malcolm Sargent at the last Courtauld-Sargent concert. One of the younger critics who is a skilful musician wrote that this work might provide matter for some observations in future text-books on orchestration but that was all; another wrote: "Antony, Cleopatra, military Rome: their splendour invites something more. But sandstorms seem to prevail."

The work in question is entitled by the composer *Egyptian Nights*, a symphonic suite. It was first composed as incidental music to a drama of that title produced at the Makerney Theatre in Moscow in 1935, which was described as being "after G. Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*, Pushkin, and Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*." The present suite was arranged by Prokoviev and performed for the first time in February, 1936, under the composer's direction at the Concerts Pasdeloup in Paris. The suite consists of seven short movements, which are entitled as follows: (1) Egypt at Night, *Adagio;* (2) Caesar, the Sphinx and Cleopatra, *Andantino;* (3) The Alarm, *Allegro inquieto;* (4) Dances, *Allegretto—Allegro energico;* (5) Antony, *Andante mosso;* (6) Cleopatra's Death, *Lento doloroso;* (7) Roma Militaris, *Andante maestoso—Allegro.*

Prokoviev is a composer I have always admired. In my opinion he is at least as important in the history of music as Debussy—that is to say, he has an original, creative musical mind. His music is not merely that of a highly trained and talented professional musician. I admit that the border-line which separates the talented professional musician from the creative musical artist is sometimes hard to draw. But as I believe in burning boats when I feel certain about anything and in committing myself I will give a few examples of what I mean by this distinction. Dr. Weingartner has composed many symphonies. What I have heard of them convinces me that as a composer he is in the category of the talented professional. So is Mr. John Ireland, a new work by whom entitled a "London Overture" was given its first performance preceding the Prokoviev last Saturday. Border cases, or cases nearer the border, shall I say, are Paul Hindemith and Ralph Vaughan Williams. But Prokoviev, in my opinion, is something more, he is a creative musician and I shall try to say why I think so in describing this new Symphonic Suite.

The average talented musician presented with the task of writing incidental music to *Egyptian Nights* would produce something that everybody would expect and would instantly recognise as appropriate. Can we not all imagine it? Desert music, Arabic, near-Eastern colour in the style of a well-known living Italian composer whom I will not name. Then Caesar, the Sphinx, Cleopatra and Antony all conceived in terms of a Drury Lane melodrama with gorgeous colouring—the grandiose and the obvious all dished up in the profuse magnificence of a Lyons Corner House chef. In short, all the tricks of the trade as becomes what I have described as the professional musician. The other obvious way of tackling this dangerous subject was to guy it in the manner fashionable among the many intellectuals to-day uneasily conscious as they are that seriousness is not enough. The very fact that Prokoviev falls into neither of these errors shows that he is an artist.

The first three sections of his Suite are brief, and notable chiefly for their exquisite tact. There is not one bar too many and not a note too much, but every touch is significant. This presence of a concentrated musical intelligence, so fully aware of every sound that it puts on paper as to avoid every possible harmonic or rhythmic banality, is in itself enough to give the sensitive listener great pleasure. But it is not until the fifth section headed *Antony* that we get something more than fine taste. This section is a panegyric without rhetoric, the celebration of a hero but without heroics, a funeral march—without the nodding plumes of funereal convention. Yet it is beautiful and appropriate. Even finer is the following section, *Cleopatra's Death.* This is exquisitely lyrical as contrasted with the more march-like character of the *Antony* section. It cannot be described, but I consider it one of the purest pieces of imaginative and poetic writing in modern music. At the end of it there is a curious orchestral effect as of the buzzing of insects. Knowing the odd character of Prokoviev's mind from his other music, I am tempted to think that this is a reference to the winged serpent of legend. I say this with hesitation because the effect is so beautiful, so purely musical and not at all an intrusive piece of Straussian realism. To cap these two superb sections, which are much longer than the previous ones, Prokoviev concludes with a magnificent piece of restrained, austere military pomp that is a model of classical grace. We complain to-day that the classical spirit has been lost. Well, if ever there was a composer imbued with the true classical spirit it is Prokoviev. In my opinion his art is not only classical in spirit but also wholly original, and he is the only living composer known to me of whom that is true.

I might add that there is about the whole of this *Egyptian Nights* a certain puppet-like quality. I do not mean by this any suggestion of marionette music, or of dryness. I mean, rather, than Antony and Cleopatra, Rome and Egypt are viewed from a very long way off—in a light lit from no contemporary lamp. This fact may serve to support my claim that Prokoviev has the classical spirit. He does not belittle, he is not debunking or guying in the cheap modern manner, he is only looking at things from a great distance and in that calm tranquil light which suffuses the paintings of great Italian masters such as Giorgione. I hope that some others who were present felt some of the enthusiasm for this piece that I experienced.

At the last Tea-time Concert at the Queen Mary Hall, owing to the sudden indisposition of Irene Eisinger who was to have sung, Miss Maria Donska had to fill the entire programme. She played Schumann's Fantasiestücke, Chopin's Polonaise in F sharp minor and Nocturne in C minor and Beethoven's C minor Sonata, Op. 111. Her playing was exquisitely musical, a sure taste and a fine intelligence mark everything she does. Only in the Polonaise did I feel that the work needed a dramatic imagination and intensity that were not forthcoming. Miss Donska is a musician's pianist—a type that is exceedingly rare.

W. J. TURNER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Beyond Compère," at the Duchess

Beyond Compère is clearly designed to amuse men on leave, and will no doubt succeed in its mission. The ordinary West End public will probably find it a trifle unsophisticated; for though it deals largely in the nicer sort of smut there is no satire and very little sex-appeal. Mr. Frankau, of course, is the backbone of the evening, and his sly leers and polished baldness make even well-worn jokes about public schools and pukka sahibs appear not only naughty but new. He is, however, essentially a specialised cabaret artist, and the songs and wisecracks that ravish for ten minutes in the small hours of the morning wear rather thin spread over two or three hours. It is regrettable, too, that in this, his new show, he still relies on slight variations of old numbers that even the Frankau charm cannot prevent from looking somewhat tarnished. The remainder of the cast do their best. Mr. Ted Ray is amusing with a violin, and cracks witticisms about holidays in Paris until the sweat runs down his face; Mr. Thomas Godfrey tap-dances with originality and great skill; and Miss Sylvia Saetre, who is made to sing a long, wholly tasteless glorification of prostitution, has so many curves and curls that one scarcely approaches her performance critically. Miss Renee Roberts shows wit and intelligence in her one opportunity to employ such qualities; it is a pity that she was given so little scope. *Beyond Compère* is a goodish specimen of simple provincial fun. It compares with the usual London revue as mild-and-bitter does with black velvet.

The London Ballet, at the Arts Theatre Club

Wendy Toye's new ballet at the Arts Theatre, *La Leçon Apprise*, is composed on a ballet suite by Milhaud, of which the choreographic possibilities had already been turned to account by Balanchine. Both the choreography and Joseph Karl's decor have a refreshing sparkle, ingenuity and vivacious movement. The decor is indeed wholly delightful, and certain *longueurs* in the ballet seem to be only the natural, if paradoxical, result of the rapid productions favoured by the Arts Theatre Club. We made the experiment of interpreting the ballet by our eyes, instead of by the printed libretto; and this is what we saw. An elderly Armenian, rich in oriental gestures, is disporting himself in a Levantine seaport, perhaps on the Golden Horn, with six charming girls whose dresses also have a joyously Turkish flavour. One rashly assumes they are his stock-in-trade. An extremely elegant young soldier, who might belong to any stage army, is favoured by all the young ladies, but has difficulty in making his choice. He whirls away to the wars with his cardboard army, and the Armenian is seen in agitated conclave with some picturesque peasants at a market, whose frail, transparent skirts seem to symbolise the kind of wares they sell. In the last scene, where the peasants have joined the *filles de joie* in the Armenian's house, the soldier makes his choice, but as he has only a military medal with which to pay for his pleasures he is forced to retire, though one of the girls is much in love with him. But this reading was all wrong; the programme said that the Bosphorus was a French fishing village, the Armenian was the French bourgeois father of six daughters, the frail-virtued peasants were neighbours who warned Papa of his daughters' goings-on with the soldier. Only the *leçon apprise* was the same in both versions: you cannot, however gallant and handsome, buy a French daughter or a Bosphorine gay lady with a military medal or, as the programme says, a button.

Peggy van Praagh, as the principal daughter, and Frank Staff, as the soldier, danced delightfully, and the choreography showed a much more varied sense of the relation of dance to music than that of *Cap Over Mill* which we noticed recently. Frank Staff has now a very fine technique and beautiful bearing; his immaturity is seen chiefly in his hands, which have not yet submitted to the refining process of classical dance technique. It is no disparagement of Wendy Toye's choreography to suggest that it is susceptible of an alternative interpretation. Clearly, not all ballets can be toyed with in this way. In Anthony Tudor's *Jardin aux Lilas*, for example, with its rather stifling nocturnal atmosphere, tense with suppressed but real human emotions, the apparent nebulosity is an illusion; it is filled to the brim with a definite and ineluctable significance. Though *La Leçon Apprise* is the only actual novelty in this short season of the London Ballet, several of the ballets, such as *Dark Elegies* have a new value in virtue of the excellence of the ensemble. One must add that the two pianos were exceptionally well played by Gerald Gover and Mary Peppin.

"Pinocchio," at the New Gallery

"The Invisible Man Returns," at the Leicester Square Theatre

Walt Disney's second full-length picture *Pinocchio* is not only technically a remarkable improvement on anything he has produced before but also an enchanting entertainment. The original story by Carlo Lorenzini is (or was) immensely popular with American children for no very clear reason. Commonplace in plot and style, it is Victorian in its persistent moralising. Moreover, the cautionary episodes become in the film even more alarming, and we should be shy of taking a small child to see the infernal retribution that awaits boys who smoke or play poker. Mr. Disney, who for years has been getting more horrific, in this film far out-Karloffs Karloff. As a draughtsman he is only occasionally, and as if by chance, elegant: his good fairy is a cutie off a chocolate-box, his architecture is the debased Nuremburg of a thousand children's Annuals. (Compare the delightful drawing in the English cartoon-film made by Mr. Anthony Gross.) Yet *Pinocchio* is irresistible, because of the constant and ever surprising fancifulness. Every minute provides some new and ingenious detail, exploiting the wonderful elasticity of the medium. Every effect of ordinary camera-work is introduced—angle-shots, fade-outs, the distortion of water. Water, indeed, is Mr. Disney's element, and the climax of the film is a journey along the ocean-bed; a whole ship, with a man fishing from it, inside the belly of a whale; and then the escape from the whale, and a terrifying turmoil of pursuit. This is the most imaginative sequence that Mr. Disney has yet given us.

The Invisible Man Returns—but not the same one alas; apparently Claude Rains died conclusively in the first picture. This time his brother, a scientist, gives a dose of Duocaine to Geoffrey Radcliffe (Vincent Price) and thus enables him to escape from prison where he awaits execution for a murder he never committed. For those who saw the original *Invisible Man* the film from now on contains little or nothing new—there are the clothes without a body, the objects moved without apparent human agency—except the invisible guinea pigs used by the scientist in his anxious experiments for an antidote. When it is mentioned that Sir Cedric Hardwicke is in the picture it will not be difficult to guess the real murderer. There are certain improvements, on the technical side, over the first film—the objects move more convincingly and the reappearance scene is beautifully scientific. This Invisible Man lives to be seen another day; let us hope he will be—the joke is quite a funny one and retells very well.

Romantic Seventeenth Century Paintings at the Calmann Gallery

With the museums closed, an exhibition such as this is particularly refreshing, and Londoners who care about painting will enjoy a visit to 42 St. James's Place, where they can observe how the painters of the XVIIth century faced some of the same problems as painters of to-day. The finest picture is *The Maypole*, by Magnasco—it is indeed much the best Magnasco we have ever seen, with surprising delicacy of colour and so well preserved that every brush-stroke is vivid. There are two small pictures by Jan Lys, a very rare Dutch painter who at the beginning of the seventeenth century in some of his pictures already anticipates Fragonard. Drowned in a Venetian canal at an early age, he had natural gifts that might have placed him among the very great. Two fantastic landscapes by Monssù Leandro, two admirable fruit-pieces by the Neapolitan Ruoppolo, a mythological scene with a water-god by Filippo Lauro, a noble Salvator and a curious Neapolitan picture by Andrea di Leone, in which the influence of Poussin meets the influence of Spain, are among the choice works here collected.

John Lake at Wildensteins

With one exception, all the paintings in this exhibition are in *gouache*, a medium which Mr. Lake uses very ingeniously and expressively. Provence provides most of the subjects, a country the painter has evidently found impressive and congenial. Sometimes the influences of Dupy is apparent, but in his best pictures Mr. Lake is content to be himself. *The River Arun*, *Trees, Stormy Day*, *Baie des Canebiers*, *St. Tropez* and *Alps, Early Morning* are the examples that we particularly liked. He conveys the sense of distance very skilfully, his handwriting is elegant, his colour usually living and interesting. A very agreeable exhibition.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, March 23rd—
London Philharmonic Orchestra Concert, Queen's Hall, 2.45.

TUESDAY, March 26th—
China Campaign Committee Lunch, Hsiao C'hien: "Literature in Wartime China," Young's Chinese Restaurant, 180 Wardour Street, 1. Tickets 2*s*. 6*d*. from 34 Victoria Street, S.W.1.

WEDNESDAY, March 27th—
British Student Congress on "Students, Society and War," Leeds. Till April 2nd. Chief speaker: Mr. H. G. Wells. All particulars from 3 Endsleigh Street, W.C.1.

THURSDAY, March 28th—
Dr. Gooch: "The War and the Settlement," Derry & Toms, Kensington High Street, 5.
Conde de Lauradio: "The Portuguese Colonies," Royal Society, Burlington House. 5.
Richard Harman (Editor of Display): "Window Display as a Medium for State Propaganda," 158, New Bond St., 6.30.

FRIDAY, March 29th—
Fabian Nursery Meeting, "Our War Aims," 11 Dartmouth St., 6.30.
Readings in Russian and English from the Poetry of Mayakovsky, 98 Gower Street, 7.30.

Correspondence

THE KEYNES PLAN

SIR,—I am sorry that I have misinterpreted the psychology of your correspondent "White Queen," and have underestimated the attractions to a housewife of spending half her time standing in queues.

But I am wondering if you have deciphered her signature correctly. It was the Red Queen who, when inflation set in, found so much satisfaction in running faster and faster:—

> The most curious part of the thing was, that the trees and the other things round them never changed their places at all: however fast they went, they never seemed to pass anything. . . . .
>
> "Well, in *our* country," said Alice, still panting a little, "you'd generally get to somewhere else—if you ran very fast for a long time as we've been doing."
>
> "A slow sort of country!" said the Queen. "Now, *here*, you see, it takes all the running *you* can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

King's College,
Cambridge.
J. M. KEYNES

SIR,—So many Left Wing spokesmen appear to be swallowing Mr. Keynes's proposals hook, line and sinker that one is tempted to infer that the intelligentsia's heart is stronger than its head. If someone were to propose deferring the raising of wages for the "duration," and handing the wage-earners a promise to be paid at some unspecified and not easily defined future date—if this were proposed frankly as a means of preserving the present mal-distribution of incomes and property—THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION would have rejected it. But as the label on the bottle happens to be "For the benefit of the working-class; dose to be increased if profits rise," no one looks too closely into the formula. I cannot claim enough of your space to analyse the argument in full; but may I submit four points?

(1) Can the rich pay for the war? They can pay for a good deal of it. Mr. Keynes does not state how much allowance he makes in his calculations for tax evasion by the rich. Statements based on the Inland Revenue's estimates of Taxable Incomes are of course vitiated by this factor. According to the Inland Revenue a man with an income of £50,000 a year is left with only about £12,000 to spend. Common knowledge suggests that this is an absurd under-estimate of the expenditure of persons within that range of income; and the time seems ripe for an official inquiry into evasion, which was estimated at £75 millions ten years ago, and may now be anything up to £200 millions or much more. Family budgets of the rich might be studied too.

(2) Mr. Keynes's main contention is that "broadly speaking, the public as a whole cannot increase its consumption by increasing its money earnings," during the war. Therefore since our consumption is going down anyway it might as well go down in an equitable and orderly fashion. With this general sentiment I am in full agreement; and I am in favour of a financial plan to carry it into effect.

But why then does Mr. Keynes answer those who propose an annual capital levy in wartime and other radical measures by saying that they will not find enough money to reduce consumption? Our consumption—"our" meaning total consumption—gets down anyway; that is Mr. Keynes's own main arguments. He is not justified in shifting his ground when it is proposed that the capitalist should contribute to the war-fund immediately; the effect on consumption is irrelevant to the main point which is how to distribute the total burden equitably.

(3) That feature of Mr. Keynes's scheme which is original is certainly the most open to objection—the plan for deferred payments. While a system of taxation may be fairly scaled a system of forced loans is in principle incapable of reasonable graduation. This follows from the fact that under his scheme the Government would promise to give back with one hand, when it releases the deferred pay, what it took away with the other, when it collected it; it must therefore later or now confirm the mal-distribution of wealth.

(4) The worst evils of inflation occurred in the post-war years of 1919 and 1920. Mr. Keynes's scheme would exacerbate the excess of civilian demand over the supply of civilian commodities in the post-war period. The wage-earners out of work would demand their deferred pay at the worst possible moment, when the national economy was going over to a peace-time production. "The appropriate time for the ultimate release of the deposits will have arrived at the onset of the first post-war slump. For then the present position will be exactly reversed. Instead of demand being in excess of supply, we shall have a capacity to produce in excess of the current demand," writes Mr. Keynes. But supply of what, and demand for what? A plentiful supply of machine-guns; a plentiful demand for "civvies?"

Perhaps the workers will after all buy a few of the machine-guns! There will be precious little else in the way of supply for them.

The Government appears to have no financial plan: and nature abhors a vacuum. Mr. Keynes's plan is in danger of being adopted as the only one available. I hope that the Labour and Liberal parties will press on the drawing up of alternatives that are equally comprehensive, using like Mr. Keynes the devices of the iron ration, and increased direct taxation—extending to lower incomes if necessary—but also that of an annual and immediately imposed capital levy. But these devices, however the changes are rung on them, may be insufficient to avoid a steep rise of prices. How, if this war is to be fought on a basis of private enterprise and profit, can inflation be avoided? Will you or I collect tons of valuable wastepaper if we cannot get a good price for it? Will the armaments manufacturers forgo their golden harvest?

The introduction of "deferred payments" would not alter the fact that the war was being run on a "profits and dividend" basis. Inflation would still be inevitable to make the profit system work at all efficiently. Alternatively even more drastic steps of State control than were taken in the last war would be necessary to win this one. This is the real issue to be discussed.

If industry and property are not nationalised for the "duration" that is a fair warning to the Trade Unions that inflation will come, and they may be well advised to keep their hands free for the inevitable struggle for position in the spiral. To abuse the Trade Unions for their very proper caution in not promptly accepting a scheme that reduces their bargaining power while it gives them no corresponding hold over employers is at best stupid. Their only safeguard under Mr. Keynes's scheme is a promise of a post-war capital levy—on the assumption that a Government would give, let alone keep, such a promise; and no Government can bind its successor.
IAN BOWEN

All Souls' College, Oxford.

WHAT WILL HELL BE LIKE?

SIR,—Under the heading of "This England" in a recent issue of your paper, you quote the subject for a meeting of the Glenridding Methodist Church on February 15th as "What will Hell be like?" If this branch of the Methodist Church had eyes to see the world and ears to hear the news, that discussion would seem to me unnecessary. Think of the utter misery which this war, like other wars, has brought upon young men, mothers, wives and lovers! Why seek further? Might we not adapt a line from Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus": "For where we are is Hell?"
HENRY W. NEVINSON

4 Downside Crescent, N.W.3.

THE MORAL OF FINLAND

SIR,—If you wanted to play into the hands of Nazi propaganda, you could not have done better than your last week's leader. "Finland is a dead loss." Sweden's "entire economy, and, indeed, probably the very shape and personnel of her government, will be dictated by the Nazis." And so on for the rest of Scandinavia. The article does not even leave scope for any rally to recover lost positions. May the Lord preserve us from our friends.

The terms of the Finnish settlement by no means "make it clear" that the Finns have lost as much as all that. They are certainly allowing themselves scope for recovery, although your article will not encourage them to believe in any solidarity among their friends here. The Germans have had no "success" in Scandinavia and no "persuasion" was needed from Nazi sources in order to interpret British and French policies along the lines consistently argued in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

It may be surprising but the Scandinavians are able to see facts and to interpret them correctly without benefit of either Nazi or British advice. As far as Finland is concerned, they were put clearly and bluntly by Mr. Steer in the *Daily Telegraph* on March 12th: "If there is hesitation to accept the Allied offer made yesterday by the British Prime Minister, it is due to fear not of the Allied will, but of the Allied power to aid Finland more than a hostile Germany could damage her in the Baltic, and from the air." In the same way the Scandinavian States had to temper their eagerness to help with the consideration that they would have to face war with two Great Powers. It is not for the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and its friends in British politics to oppose that statement of the position, because they have been well content to limit British belligerency to one Great Power.

But the inference is not that Finland and the Scandinavian States are knuckling under. They are not giving way to the "lyrical pessimism" of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION but are pushing ahead with the greatest armament programme in their history. Their representative press, and not the few newspapers which are curiously overquoted in the British Press, show their fighting spirit. To them "the moral of Finland" is encouraging and not otherwise.

53 Albany Street, N.W.1. BJARNE BRAATOY

[We are glad to have Mr. Braatoy's opinion that the picture we painted of the Scandinavian position was unduly pessimistic. We must remind him of Mr. Chamberlain's statement that "it was only German threats which terrified the Scandinavian countries" into withholding help to Finland. We did not criticise Norway and Sweden; we explained their terrible dilemma and its possible consequences.—ED. *N.S.&N.*]

NAZI-SOVIET PERSECUTION

SIR,—Mr. M. H. Dobb in his letter on Nazi-Soviet persecution states that he went as "carefully as possible" into the published evidence on police (G.P.U.) torture in U.S.S.R., and found only one piece of evidence (Tchernavin's), but as he cannot remember rightly if this evidence be first-hand or not, he prefers to ignore it, and comes to the amazing conclusion that no evidence for such tortures exists.

This letter is to refresh Mr. Dobb's memory and to tell him that my (Tchernavin's) evidence of systematic tortures by G.P.U. of political prisoners, both for the extraction of confessions in prison and after sentence in prison-camps, is a first-hand one; that torture has been applied for at least fifteen years to many thousands of G.P.U. prisoners. My first-hand evidence of torture, applied to myself and my fellow-prisoners, was published in *The Times* in 1933, during the British engineers' trial, and was confirmed by several well-known persons, including Sir Bernard Pares; in 1933 I published two articles in *The Slavonic Review* (London University) on tortures in Soviet prisons and concentration camps, and in 1934 a detailed account in my book, *I Speak for the Silent*. Several first-hand accounts of torture in U.S.S.R. prisons have been published in all the countries of the world, (e.g. Solonevich), even in this country where the pleasant concept of a Soviet paradise is unshaken after the Soviet-Nazi union and destruction of Finland. I would gladly give a list of these publications.

I should also like to remind well-fed lazy admirers of the Soviets, studying "carefully" in their comfortable armchairs the tortures of Soviet prisoners, and wishing for more "first-hand" evidence, that those who went through Soviet prisons and tortures have almost no chance of escape, of being able to speak, and that those who were tortured to death, or shot after torture, as were many of my friends, will never give their first-hand evidence.

80a, Overstrand Mansions, S.W.11. V. TCHERNAVIN

SIR,—In the current issue of your paper Mr. M. H. Dobb returns to the defence of the Russian régime against the relatively minor charge that it makes use of torture as an instrument of government. Mr. Dobb, like Professor Laski, establishes no difference whatever in the type of evidence upon which the charges against Germany and Russia are based. We all know of refugees from both countries who make precisely the same allegations. The truth of these accusations is supported, in each case, by resident newspaper correspondents and the publications of *emigré* organisations. Everything that Mr. Dobb says, in order to discredit the evidence offered in the case of Russia, could be applied with equal force to the evidence he appears to accept in the case of Germany. Such a position is indefensible—both régimes must be condemned or acquitted, in this matter, together.

I say, with a full consciousness of the loathsomeness of torture, that this is nevertheless a minor point. Both Mr. Dobb and Professor Laski admit, since they cannot possible deny, the use by both régimes of the other instruments of terror—imprisonment without trial, exile, and mass executions. Between them, these modes of persecution cause infinitely more human suffering than the deliberate infliction of physical or mental pain upon defenceless prisoners. In these savage exercises, ruthless, brutal and senseless, the Soviet Government, upon the basis of its own official admissions, holds an unrivalled and unhonoured leadership.

33 York Terrace, N.W.1. E. F. M. DURBIN

CIVIL LIBERTIES IN CANADA

SIR,—Mr. R. S. Lambert's article on "Civil Liberty in Canada," in your issue of February 3rd, is timely and valuable. Unfortunately there have crept into it certain minor inaccuracies which I hope you will allow me space to correct.

The Quebec "Padlock Law" is not so recent a measure as Mr. Lambert's words might lead your readers to suppose. It was passed March 31st, 1937. I may add that one of its worst features is something to which Mr. Lambert makes no reference: the power

Whither Russia?

In an article in the last issue of N. S. & N., John Stevens 'A neutral journalist resident in Moscow' wrote:

"Somewhere about 1937, perhaps earlier, perhaps later, Stalin decided that Socialism could be built independently in Russia, but that it was excessively expensive. Productivity of labour was rising so slowly that it would take generations to catch up to most advanced countries."

We can only suppose that this neutral journalist had not read

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given to the Attorney-General to confiscate and destroy, without judicial process, any literature which, in his sole judgment, " propagates or tends to propagate Communism or Bolshevism." Under this section hundreds of raids have taken place, and, according to official figures, over 100,000 books, papers, pamphlets and other forms of literature have been seized.

Second, the Alberta " Act " interfering with the press was not an Act at all. The Lieutenant-Governor did not assent to it, but reserved it for the Governor-General's pleasure. The Dominion Government thereupon referred it to the Supreme Court, which declared it *ultra vires*. As the Governor-General did not give his assent to the reserved Bill within the statutory period of one year, it never became law. This Bill was a much more formidable measure than Mr. Lambert's article indicates, for it gave the provincial government power to prohibit entirely the publication of any newspaper or periodical which contravened certain provincial orders or regulations. A full account both of this extraordinary measure and of the Padlock Act may be found in an article of mine in *Politica* for June last. Both measures have many beauties for which neither Mr. Lambert's article nor this letter could find space.

Third, it is not the Dominion " Immigration " authorities but the Customs authorities which have power to ban the import of books and papers.

Fourth, the strike of shipbuilding workers was not at " St. John's " (a small inland town in Quebec) but at Saint John, New Brunswick, one of Canada's two large Atlantic winter ports.

Montreal. EUGENE FORSEY

RUMANIA'S MINORITIES

SIR,—In your issue of February 24th under the title " Rumania's Minorities " (p. 244) it is stated that the figures of percentage I gave for the three main elements in the population of Transylvania differ from those given by the late Count Apponyi. This statement is erroneous. The data quoted as mine refer to the whole territory ceded by Hungary to Rumania, while the figures of Count Apponyi are those for Transylvania alone. The population of the ceded territory west from Transylvania proper being almost entirely Hungarian, it is quite natural that the percentage of Hungarians is considerably higher for the whole territory ceded to Rumania than that for Transylvania alone. There is no contradiction then between Count Apponyi's figures and mine, all the less as we both used the absolutely reliable data of official Hungarian statistics.

Munkácsy u. 17, Budapest. GEORGE LUKÁS

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DEMOCRACY IN FRANCE

SIR,—In your issue of March 9th you state that Arthur Koestler is among those whom it has been decided not to release from internment in France.

I have good reason to believe that you have been misinformed. The Secretary of the Maison International des P.E.N. Clubs in Paris assures me that the steps taken by this Association have been successful and that Mr. Koestler is now free. Perhaps Mr. Koestler himself is in a position to confirm this ?

The P.E.N., HERMON OULD,
11 Gower Street, W.C.1. International Secretary

[We quoted from official information. If the French authorities have changed their minds about Mr. Koestler we are happy to hear of it. *Ed. N.S. & N.*]

CHURCH AND STATE

SIR,—One is compelled to ask whether Mr. Wilson has ever read a single thing that Mr. Gerald Heard has written ? To call him a fatalist and to assert that he and Mr. Huxley are " men who are weary and wish to escape from the battle of ideas " is so wide of the mark as to be comic.

They are in fact in the vanguard of this battle, and escape from it would mean they had nothing left to live for. Whatever they owe to Buddhism it is not fatalism ; and neither is that what we owe to them.

To investigate the possibility of a mutation which would enable man's spiritual development to catch up with his intellect ; to explore means whereby individual desires can be transcended for the common good ; to give mankind a vision of what his evolutionary emergence might be if he would only will it so ; is this to retire fatalistically from the field of battle ? or is it to keep alive for us, in the days of growing despair, our faith in the spirit of man and in that larger reality which alone can provide a sanction for morality ?

As for " retiring " to Hollywood, since when did the place of one's dwelling determine the quality of one's thinking ? Let us avoid irrelevant and misplaced moral strictures. A live mind and courageous will can obviously function as effectively in California as in Downing Street or Blaydon-on-Tyne.

Dartington Hall. M. E. ISHERWOOD

BRITISH PROPAGANDA

SIR,—You may be interested in the following facts. The Government has been concerned about the attitude of students to the war, and it was suggested that Leeds University should have a speaker under the auspices of the Ministry of Information to address the staff and students.

The University selected several names from the panel of speakers; but they were all unable to come. At last they secured Mr. Strauss, M.P. for Norwich.

This gentleman began by explaining that he was a Conservative. He said he was not competent to discuss the economic causes of the war ; that he was equally unable to deal with the subject of the universities in wartime and after ; and that, as for war aims, there could only be one aim—to win the war. He stressed the fact that we were fighting not Nazism, but the German people, as we were in 1914. He made rude remarks about Socialists, and alas ! referred to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION as " the Bible of the half-educated." He complimented the French Government on its infringement of civil liberties, on the grounds that during a war, a man is asked to give up not only liberty but his life, and therefore liberty isn't very important.

Now, if, as I am assured, the purpose of this, and of similar meetings at other universities, is to persuade the students to support the war wholeheartedly, it seems to me to be a very queer way of doing it. Mr. Strauss not only annoyed those who take the Communist line of making peace at once ; he also annoyed Socialists who do support the war ; and Liberals who thought it bad taste to make a party speech at such a meeting ; and intellectuals, who thought it was insulting to a University audience to make such a speech at all. In fact, Mr. Strauss annoyed everyone except the Tories, and they did not require his exhortations.

Leeds. M.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

MEN do not like to hear their neighbours praised—they would usually much rather hear themselves abused. For self-centredness is the most vigilant of our proclivities. In a crisis, however, the need to feel superior is overwhelmed by the need to be hopeful. A man seized with cramp in deep water is glad (probably for the first time) that his friend has always been a stronger swimmer than himself. So it happens now that we in England think thankfully of the Maginot Line, of Generals Gamelin and Georges, and of the long history that reveals in the French an unparalleled amalgam of gallantry and intelligence. I think, therefore, that there should be a vast public eager to read Mr. Somerset Maugham's *France at War* (Heinemann, 6*d*.). He has been with the French Army at the front, at sea in a French heavy cruiser and torpedo-boat, in the factories, too, that feed the forces of land and sea and air, but he concentrates not so much upon the material strength, the buried skyscrapers of the Line, the precision of the naval shooting, the gargantuan gun-foundries, as upon the minds and hearts of French men and women. Mr. Maugham has a reputation for cynicism: believing that very few of us have the right to throw the first stone, he likes to expose the weaknesses that we try to conceal even from ourselves. In any case, he is congenitally incapable of the unctuous complacency that made civilian writers in the last war so frequently disgusting. He does not pretend that the French and the English have hearts that beat as one, merely because they are allies:

> I have sometimes been inclined to think that one reason why the French and the English understand one another so little is that in England you can think anything you like so long as you behave like everybody else, while in France you can do pretty well everything you choose so long as you think like your neighbour.

I can't make up my mind whether this sentence is profound or merely neat. In foreign policy, I suggest, the difference is that caution and realism make the French short-sighted, while fecklessness and idealism make the English long-sighted—which is not the same as far-sighted. Entranced by visions of a desirable future, we are blind to what goes on under our noses. "There is a bitter feeling among the people of France that the present war has been thrust upon them by the obstinacy of the Allies at the Peace Conference, which prevented them from obtaining the safeguards which they were convinced were necessary in order to preclude a resumption of the struggle for existence." They are at war now with something more permanent than Hitler:

> To eliminate him and think you have gained anything is as absurd as to imagine you have rendered a battleship impotent because you have shot away its colours. No. France is at war, doggedly, resignedly, heroically, not with Hitler and the Nazis only, but with Germany. She is prepared to live at peace with Germany, but only with a Germany powerless to threaten her security.

Mr. Maugham met among the refugees a funny little old woman with white hair. "I'm over eighty," she told him, "and this is the third time I've had to flee from my house in Lorraine." And she added: "It is too much."

In *France at War* there are many revealing pictures: women working in wool factories within easy range of German guns; the cakes mouldering in a confectioner's window in deserted Strasbourg; sailors smoking at their work—"though discipline was perfect, there was the same pleasantly democratic feeling in the French Navy as I had found in the French Army"; the elegance of modern weapons, "this is the work of miniaturists"; an elderly priest with six parishes to look after, so many of his colleagues had been mobilised, and only a bicycle on which to get about. (Could not some of the countless laid-up motors in England be sent to the French clergy?) But most impressive of all is the picture of the refugees from Alsace and Lorraine now in the Charente, and the inventiveness, worthy of shipwrecked mariners, with which they have contrived "to reduce confusion to order and restore to life something of a pattern." It is the genius of the French to combine a natural orderliness with a natural individualism. It is this which makes them a people of artists, so that a cook mixes his ingredients, and a market-woman arranges her cheeses with an elegance and personal pride like that of a painter placing colour by colour. This people has been mobilised three times in one year—in September, 1938, in the following March, and then again last August. Out of only forty millions, including greybeards, women and children, five millions have been called up. Their one desire was to be left alone, to cultivate their fields, to sit fishing, to argue over their coffee. They are now standing in the defences that they had the forethought to build, defences for which we cannot be sufficiently grateful. When war aims are discussed, have they not the first claim to be heard?

After reading Mr. Somerset Maugham's impressive account of France at war, I turned to Mr. Len Ortzen's *Rue de Paris* (Cassell, 7*s*. 6*d*.), a book about a France still nominally at peace. Mr. Ortzen, a young novelist who had lived much in the East End, made himself a home in a corresponding district of Paris. He became a friend of a family that ran a little restaurant, of the local butcher and of other people in the quarter, who emerge in his book as exemplary representatives of that working-class France which English writers have not often described. Mr. Ortzen, while he has little distinction of style, is shrewd, observant and obviously very amiable. He makes vivid to us the Tom, Dick and Harriet of France, their gaiety, their stoicism, their domesticity, their deep sense of fraternity and equality, their gift for living. I know no book so appreciative of France as a practising democracy, and I think that it should be republished at sixpence. The English man in the street—and the soldier going to France—could gain from it a livelier understanding of the people with whom it is our good fortune to be allied.

Next I began reading M. Edouard Herriot's *The Wellsprings of Liberty* (Hutchinson, 7*s*. 6*d*.). Distinguished as a historian hardly less than as a statesman, M. Herriot has written a summary of the benefits achieved by the French Revolution. The eloquence of Burke and, more conspicuously, the tawdry romanticalness of our more ignorant novelists have infected many English people with the idea that the French Revolution was a bloodthirsty outburst of mob violence. In fact the Terror was short and by modern standards astonishingly unterrible. The laws introduced by the Revolution were almost without exception excellent. True, the right of association (so essential to industrial workers) was not admitted, so that the bourgeoisie and peasants were the chief beneficiaries; and liberty of the press was granted only to disappear rapidly under the stress of war. But the immensity of the legislative achievement during the Revolution has made France, despite intervening dictatorships, the most free country in Europe. M. Herriot records how rapid legislation gave equality to Protestants, Jews and negroes, abolished torture, made education free and compulsory, divided the land, and effected equality before the law, whisking away the piled up silliness of centuries.

> Society is obliged to provide for the subsistence of all its members. . . . The help needed by him who lacks necessities is the obligation of him who has a superfluity. It is the province of the law to determine in what way this obligation shall be fulfilled.

This declaration by Robespierre has still not been implemented: in recent years of prosperity there have, unluckily, been Conservative Governments in France. The right to help oneself has been more regarded than the duty to help one's neighbour. Yet the French remain—in my experience—more democratic than either the British or the Americans.

The politicians of the French Revolution may have been on the whole a sorrier crew than M. Herriot would admit—mediocre men who took their excellent ideas from the eighteenth-century thinkers. In the Arts the Revolutionary period was, for France, singularly barren. But M. Herriot justly insists upon the flowering of minds that accompanied "the dynamism of liberty." He gives an account, too brief, of the great scientists then active. That the new climate of liberty encouraged such men is certain; but it is also true, I think, that great men are one sign of a nation's general strength. The expansive reigns in England, those of Elizabeth, Anne, George III and Victoria, were distinguished by great names in the intellectual field no less than in politics and war. When a country is due for increase in power, her destiny shows in an outburst of poetry or painting or scientific discovery. The Germans to-day boast of their dynamism, and condemn the French and ourselves as effete. If they were fated now to supplant the Western democracies, I believe that we should see among them "a flowering of minds." We see nothing of the sort. What names can they show in the arts and sciences? Few, and those often Jews, and almost always refugees. In France and Great Britain the statesmen may be uninspiring, but the intellectual vigour, if less remarkable than in the nineteenth century, is immeasurably superior to that of the Germans. If to-day they had a Beethoven, a Kant and a Goethe, I should feel less confident of their defeat.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

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CONSTABLE

GERMANY

The German People Versus Hitler. By HEINRICH FRAENKEL. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

Here Lies Goebbels. By VERNON MACKENZIE. *M. Joseph.* 10s. 6d.

How to Conquer Hitler. By HELLMUT VON RAUSCHENPLAT and HILDA MONTE. *Jarrolds.* 10s. 6d.

Hitler Over Latin America. By N. P. MACDONALD. *Jarrolds.* 12s. 6d.

I Loved Germany. By SIR EVELYN WRENCH. *Michael Joseph.* 12s. 6d.

In the last war the Allied Governments had the better secret service than the Germans and were much better propagandists. To-day we have to face the fact that the Nazis have remedied these defects in German organisation. Nothing could be easier than to include a number of Nazi spies within the ranks of the scores of thousands of innocent exiles turned out of Germany. Nazi overseas methods of racial organisation and their blackmail of Germans abroad through threats to their relatives at home also brought for Germany before the war many reluctant agents and propagandists who could not be classified as spies, but who served much the same purpose. Nazi counter-espionage has been equally good. They have been highly successful in preventing information reaching other countries from Germany. As for their "ideological" propaganda, no nation has ever been led by such practical experts in human psychology as Hitler and Goebbels. So far all Hitler's victories, both within and without Germany, have been won by undermining and dividing his opponents.

Books now written about Germany are apt to show a wide knowledge of Nazi Germany up to 1938, but to betray an unavoidable ignorance about Germany in 1940. Heinrich Fraenkel's *The German People Versus Hitler* is an example of the gross over-optimism of the Left. It contains a great deal of general information about the Opposition work of the Socialist underground movement and the fight of the Confessional and Catholic churches. There are interesting examples of peasant disaffection and of opposition from the artisan and shopkeeping class. We hear once more about the Conservative efforts to modify the Nazi régime and about trouble in the Nazi ranks and among students. The tactics of the various Opposition groups is discussed with knowledge. But when we reach the present war we only know that the Czechs are tough and that a large number of people have been beheaded and so forth. About the crucial question of the effect of the partnership with Russia on the underground movement we have no real information, and we are told with far too little evidence that the German masses are only waiting for a chance to overthrow the Nazis. *Here Lies Goebbels* by Vernon Mackenzie, is an American journalist's survey of Nazi propaganda all over the world. Perhaps the most valuable section deals with the Islam world listening in to Nazi broadcasts. The author concludes that Goebbels has failed in the Near East and his general conclusion is that "Goebbels cannot win, for one reason, that his label the world over is too patently 'made in Germany.'". Mr. Macdonald's book is confined to a full and informed account of German propagandist penetration in Latin America. In some countries, notably in Brazil, Goebbels has overplayed his hand, and Mr. Macdonald sees in Brazil the centre of resistance to German influence. He is less optimistic than Mr. Mackenzie, but he holds, rightly, that the real hope lies in "the continued success of President Roosevelt's Good Neighbour policy" and in a reversal of Britain's shortsighted apathy throughout Latin America.

How to Conquer Hitler, after discussing Germany's preparations for the blockade and the effect of the shortage of food and raw materials, goes on to deal with the moral weapons that may be used to undermine the régime. A number of interesting examples are given of propaganda methods. The authors describe an unusual Nazi trick during the Polish War. A fake official British wireless station encouraged the Poles with the news of British help on the way to them. Large promises were supposed to have been made by Britain; it was even stated on September 7th that the Siegfried Line had already been broken in seventeen places. The object of the manoeuvre was to raise hopes in the minds of the Poles, who were correspondingly depressed and angry when the Nazis revealed that no direct help was actually coming from their Western Allies. This method, it is suggested, might be effectively used against the Nazis. "Difficulties could be created for them if announcements and decrees which the German people would like to hear were broadcast to them apparently by the Nazis, who afterwards would be forced to deny the truth of the statements. The consequence would be that people would stop believing in genuine Nazi announcements, thinking that they might be a hoax." As any student of propaganda knows, there are no limits to the trickery and counter-trickery possible in the new world of centralised governments.

In a long view there is no hope for the world on these lines. The effects of twenty-five years of propaganda and of seven years of totalitarian propaganda has been to create little except a vast bewilderment, scepticism and apathy. In time propaganda rebounds against its controllers. But unless a positive faith in something that is not founded in fraud has been substituted, the destruction of the governments which tell the most lies will not make room for anything better. For in the long run, social integration rests on a confidence between man and man, a trust in those who lead and in popular habits both of loyalty and initiative. It is still true to-day that one of the Allies' strongest cards is that they tell fewer lies than their enemies. There is still some confidence in the world that British broadcasts and even British news reports are not sheer inventions. But truth which merely consists in not telling palpable falsehoods is not enough; every one of these books, written by men who have studied Germany and German propaganda, emphasises, implicitly or explicitly, the need of an allied "dynamic." Truth to win must be positive and must be backed by faith; if our leaders are merely "decent," but stand for nothing except the *status quo*, they and those they are supposed to lead will perish however the war ends.

Sir Evelyn Wrench reminds me of the elderly gentleman whose tragedy Bernard Shaw describes in *Back to Methuselah;* a thoroughly worthy and goodnatured fellow, who finds himself quite unable to adjust to a strange new world and dies of discouragement. A sincere and lifelong lover of Germany, Sir Evelyn Wrench got his first shock when the first anti-Jewish outbreak occurred after Hitler's triumph in 1933. He received his final shock last year with the seizure of Prague. His book describes earlier travels in Germany, but is mainly concerned with a peace-searching mission in Europe last summer. He did the routine tourist round in Moscow and hated Russia much more than Germany. But he realised in Germany that the country he had known and loved had been submerged, and he returned with his vision of a peaceful Europe finally shattered.

TOM PAINE

A CHART TO SCIENCE

Science Since 1500. By H. T. PLEDGE. *H.M. Stationery Office.* 7s. 6d.

Science To-day and To-morrow. By WALDEMAR KAEMPFFERT. *Nicholson and Watson.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Pledge points out that his book is an attempt to fill a niche in the rather small group of studies of the history of modern science as a whole which have been published anywhere, or at any time. It is aimed primarily at people working in the field of science, but there is no doubt at all that if anyone wishes to proceed from the level of Hogben's *Science for the Citizen* to a more intimate study of the internal development of science then this is the book that is wanted. The relation of science at its various stages of development to the life around is clearly shown and there is brought out the part played by the impetus and structure of science itself. A number of diagrams show the chains of master and pupil and the geographical distribution of scientists in the countries of western Europe. There are three background articles on the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, just enough to tie up the corresponding sections of the book with the ideas prevailing. Mr. Pledge takes a considerable interest in the way in which technique influences science, and three of the first four chapters, for example, deal with biology before the microscope, astronomy before the telescope, and mathematics before the calculus. It is this interest which leads him to show how nineteenth-century mathematics is the necessary prelude to modern physics. The last half of the book draws together most of modern science and will demonstrate to the specialist (and others) the close relation of his branch to the main body. Two concluding chapters deal with real materials and bring the reader right up to the border of modern technology. On this the author lays emphasis:

> The sciences are the antennae of the great insect of industry. Yet for this very reason, among others, they are also closer to professional

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THE FACTORY IN A GARDEN

> philosophy than they have been for a long time. For the relation of the growth of our knowledge to its material backgrounds, geographical or industrial, is giving rise to much concern, and any view of this relation amounts to a philosophy.

The difficulty of an appreciation of science lies in grasping its growth :

> Atomic physics, the domain of mathematical order, is certainly also the anarchic subject of present-day science. No sooner does it set up the nucleus as unassailable than it breaks down. No sooner does it confine radioactivity to a small region of the periodic table than it induces it artificially in other regions. No sooner does it reduce matter to electrons and protons than it flings several more ultimate particles into the cauldron. Indeed, no sooner does it erect elaborate mathematics on the constancy of the velocity of light, the absence of " ether drift," and the recession of the nebulae, than it alleges evidence against these doctrines. Yet " anarchy " is the wrong word. At no time has it been impossible to keep one's bearings, though not for a generation has it been possible to keep long on any one tack.

Science Since 1500 is the best chart to modern science that I know.

There are two great problems in the vulgarisation of science : getting the facts right, and getting them across. The choice of subject matter depends on tradition, scientific and journalistic, and it is often bad if the latter has the stronger pull. In some quarters the giving of much space to speculation about the extra-galactic universes has been vigorously attacked ; it is a fact that a more widespread knowledge of the potentialities of science in this world would help to improve the conditions of life. However, the close connection of astrophysics with atomic physics justifies Waldemar Kaempffert's starry excursions, particularly in view of his attempt to make a good job of explaining the atom by comparing it with a symphony :

> The analogy between a symphony and an atom is more accurate than may be supposed. We cannot make a model of a symphony as we can of a house. Neither can we make a model of the atom as it is now conceived, because there is nothing tangible about it. We cannot talk about Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and hope to make anyone who has never heard it understand how it sounds. Nor can we talk about the atom in terms of protons, electrons, and neutrons in the hope of making anybody who is not a good mathematician understand how it emits particles if it is a radium atom or why it sends out light when it is electrically excited.

On a number of the key concepts of modern science *Science To-day and To-morrow* throws a brighter light. This suggests that it might be fruitful work for a Metaphysical to turn his metaphor to the plough of science : doubtless he would grow himself new conceits meanwhile. Kaempffert comes down to earth from the stars and deals with synthetic materials, power, biochemistry, high-tension electricity, speed, etc. He concludes with a chapter on Democracy and the Machine, which covers the topics of invention, Luddism, technological unemployment, control, vested interests, planning. He couples technologists as a ruling class with financiers. That will give my industrial scientist friends a laugh. There are several contradictory passages of similar character, but shining through all is the international character of science and the faith that science and the culture that it builds will carry on in spite of Fascism and war.

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A PERIOD PLAYER

Both Sides of the Curtain. By ELIZABETH ROBINS. *Heinemann.* 15*s*.

" Principally known as an interpreter of Ibsen's characters." So Elizabeth Robins describes herself in successive issues of *Who's Who*. As the creator in England of the parts of Hilda Wangel, Hedda Gabler and Ella Rentheim, she has a right to the description.

Certainly we remember her best in Ibsen ; though we do not forget that she could be melodramatic, in the approved style, at the old Adelphi, and romantic in her remarkable performance of José Echegaray's *Mariana*. (In 1897, it seemed, for a moment, that Echegaray might be boomed as a hot Spanish rival to the chilly Norwegian.) But unfortunately she only approaches the most exciting period of her career on the London stage in this instalment of her autobiography, which was preceded, in 1932, by the record of her friendship with Henry James, in the book called *Theatre and Friendship*.

Miss Robins does not introduce herself, solemnly, as a pioneer Ibsenite. She bursts upon us in the dashing role of a young American widow of the period. She stuns us with teacup chatter, hurries us with her into a frequently frustrated hunt for parts, plunges us into the sort of unreal atmosphere that nowadays bathes the babble over lunch, in restaurants frequented by managers, producers, and the many " dears " and " darlings " who positively must display their presences off the stage, in order to maintain themselves, with any continuity of contract, on it. One seems to be at the theatrical agent's, or in the old actor-manager's gas-lit dressing-room. One recalls Mr. Shaw's contemporary epithets for Miss Robins—" nervous, restless, intensely self-conscious, eagerly energetic."

Of course, Miss Robins will not allow that there was anything unreal about it all. No, life was the Shadow Show in those days. Life was pale beside " that intensified, seeing, hearing, *living*, which was the stage." This is English, no doubt, as well as American. It may be eternal. At any rate, it still goes on.

Emphatically American—of the period—is the quaint association of clatter with culture. The stage-struck young woman had a devotion for ancient and modern sights and sites. Where was Beerbohm Tree ? What had become of George Alexander ? Could one impress Mrs. Kendal ? (A difficult job, that !) Call upon Henry Irving. Get Oscar Wilde's surprisingly matter-of-fact advice. Track them, make them listen, drive them into corners. But meanwhile, as the hansom-cab clatters through the fog, certain dingy windows solicit the sightseer. " Coming back "—from French's play-publishing premises—" I passed a house in Holles Street that bore on its front one of the Historical Society's tablets. I read. I went nearer. I stood a moment on Lord Byron's doorstep."

Well, his Lordship would have liked that. His Lordship understood acting.

Where, in all this, is the " solemnised and softened " Elizabeth Robins we remember ? Plaintive, yet passionate ?

I can see her in the first performance of *John Gabriel Borkman*, as she advanced, in the first scene, towards that " old iron-clad " of the theatre, Genevieve Ward. More accurately I can *hear* her. For, in those days, audiences were not permitted to *see* much of an Ibsen production. Darkness was visibly the appropriate atmosphere for the Master whose mists have long since rolled away ; and shabbiness environed even his most prosperous households. Above these shoddy upholsteries sounded the Ibsen voice. " You're surprised to see me, Gunhild ? " The old iron-clad opposite stirred uneasily. That wasn't *her* style. Hers was the Old Style—Ristori's. And, really, as Mr. Shaw pointed out at the time, these special incantations were not justified by Ibsen's text. For there is nothing in the pathetically spinsterish language of Ella Rentheim that wouldn't go well with melodrama.

It took some time to surmount the ritualistic manner in the

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acting of Ibsen. Janet Achurch alone managed to evade it. We hope to hear more of her in another volume; more, too, of William Archer, and of "Mrs. Pat," who was presently to begin toying with Ibsen. So far Miss Robins has hardly managed to reveal her profound or propagandist self. Here, she is a period, rather than a person. In this book, as her admired Henry James, lover of adverbs, might have put it, she beautifully, she deliciously, she quite deliberately, "dates." RICHARD JENNINGS

TWOPENCE COLOURED

The Laughing Mulatto. By RUTHVEN TODD. *Rich and Cowan.* 12s. 6d.

A writer on Dumas *père* who calls his work *The Laughing Mulatto* may or may not have increased his chance of a public. I doubt it very much (and incidentally, why not *The Laughing Quadroon*, which would be more exact?). But at any rate he has fairly advertised the work as no better than it should be. Mr. Todd's is not a serious Life, but a piece of bookmaking, rather cruder and more ingenuous than most. To say that it has no bibliography, and that sources are never mentioned, is to fail it in a class to which it doesn't belong. Mr. Todd writes of "Napoleon's son, the unfortunate King of Naples"; he writes "Christine of Sweden" for Christina, "Palmero" for Palermo, "on tomorrow" for tomorrow, "plumes" for pens or quills—and so forth. His style makes almost no attempt to exist. "*Antony* was about the first play about contemporary characters," "Gautier told them he wanted to go to bed again and told them they had better go home" —or, in a loftier strain: "These pinpricks could not dam the flood of books which poured out." And here is an example of the syntax: "For, when his own works, those which are undoubtedly by his hand alone, lack the punch and vigour of those he made with Dumas, and, but for his connection with the great romancer, his name would not have been known at all."

It would be futile, therefore, to inquire about scholarship. Yet in some ways *The Laughing Mulatto* is not so bad. The author doesn't give himself airs, and he has a simple pleasure in his material. And if there must be this kind of bookmaking, Dumas is the perfect sacrifice. To begin with, it serves him right. He was the most egregious of all bookmakers, and would concoct anything, or put his name to anything, that anyone could be got to buy. He was quite the worst-informed of historians. He didn't mind where or how he got his facts, or how wrong they were. So what can he expect from posterity? And then, beside being fair game, Dumas is so easy to hit. No one could possibly misread that "great baby," and any child could draw a likeness of him. There is no occasion for subtlety, and very little for the power of telling a story. The stories about Dumas can't be spoilt—at least, they can't all be spoilt; and they are so fantastic, so numerous, at their best so funny, that a record of his life can hardly be dull.

Not that he was an interesting character. In the flesh a little of him must have gone a long way. But as a spectacle, an object of thought, this negro genius (his foes were always calling him a negro, and rightly) has immense charm. Who can resist the idea of boundless good-nature and superb energy, untrammelled by the ghost of an inhibition or the faintest shadow of common sense? Dumas was a free spirit—free as any clown in the ring. He never suppressed a wish in his life; and his exploits and appetites were all on an absurd scale. Like his mind, they were perfectly naive, but that is just what makes him refreshing. He wrote five serials at once. He earned and spent hugely, and ran through several fortunes in vain pursuit of fifty-three francs—the sum he had originally brought to Paris. He sat about in scarlet tights caressing three naked women at the same time. (What a cry of "wish-fulfilment" we should hear if a novelist had ventured to make him up!) Instead of choosing one side in politics, he was thrilled by each and swanked impartially on all three. And as the truth about him was not striking enough (it could not be striking enough for that sublime ego) he improved on it by free invention. Of course his life was a failure, and his old age should have been a warning; but not at all. When there was nothing else for him to do, he read his own books, and consoled himself by looking forward to immortality.

There never was a writer who less deserved it. He had no style, no art, no literary conscience, no contact with reality, and no proper pride. It is nice to think that he may last as long as Flaubert or Henry James. K. JOHN

SOCIETY AND THE CHILD

Education and Social Change. By F. CLARKE. *The Sheldon Press.* 1s.

In this concise, effective essay of 70 pages Professor Clarke compresses the essentials of the English educational problem as it stands at present. His historical analysis demonstrates how, in the last century, an essential part of the tradition (the Franklin Priestley element) became lost, when, mainly for the vocational purpose of producing a ruling class, the Universities and Public Schools adopted the notion of a "Liberal" curriculum with its emphasis on the useless. Between the cultural and the vocational, the "liberal" and the banausic, there was set a quite false division which has not yet been healed; and "the reinterpretation of the content of culture in an age to which much of the traditional content is irrelevant" has become a major task. But this division produced a secondary consequence of primary importance, namely that the masses "shut off almost entirely by lack of access to higher education from careers above the normal working-class level, quite naturally took the new facilities provided under the act of 1902 as offering the chance not of achieving a generous humanistic culture but of rising in the economic and social scale. Indeed what else could have been expected?"

Thus secondary education has come to be little else than a scramble for *status* and the whole structure to represent little else than the rigidity of our class arrangements. The Public School guarantees a start in life, not because the education it provides is necessarily superior to that of a State secondary school, but because socially its status is superior. An able elementary school child will, regardless of the direction of its ability, aim at the secondary school because an academic education is the only way to "get on." The Spens report recognised the second of these propositions (it was lamentably silent about the first) when it proposed the establishment of technical high schools parallel with the present secondary schools; but it could not, of course, alter the social realities which this state of things represents. The war, however, may quite likely do so, especially as it must demonstrate day by day the life-and-death importance of technics. Against those social changes Professor Clarke propounds his readaptation. His suggestions have the great merit of being easily practicable since they are merely extensions of the way in which the system is now, too slowly, moving. Acceptance of the principle of Secondary Education For All would allow a unified system to use its traditional diversity for the proper purpose of satisfying different kinds of ability; while, combined with a reinterpretation of the content of our culture, it would give a common basis of a new popular culture to the whole people.

It is difficult to summarise this closely packed essay without giving an impression of crudity and unreality which it notably lacks. Its capital importance should ensure it the large number of readers which its very moderate price invites.

T. C. WORSLEY

CITY OF ESCAPE

Hollywood is the Place! By CHARLES LANDERY. *Dent.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Landery's Hollywood is no Star's playground, no gold-paved paradise, but the tawdry home of the ambition-ridden, thwarted hanger-on of the film industry. As he explains in a prologue (originally published in the NEW STATESMAN) Hollywood is merely a suburb of that vast and rapidly growing city Los Angeles, an object of contempt to the old inhabitant of that city, and a stepping-off ground for aspirants to the more elegant neo-colonial homes of the better suburbs such as Beverly Hills. Mr. Landery, arriving in Hollywood after a thoroughly unpleasant journey across America by bus, strips off the tinsel without a moment's hesitation, and conducts the reader straight behind the scenes. The people he introduces are the minor studio employees—extras, stand-ins, stunt men, electricians and small part actors—whose lives are spent waiting at the end of the telephone for a call from the studio, a call which seldom comes. The working conditions of these people are described in a way which should discourage anyone with screen ambitions. He also observes the other main section of the population, the retired business people and workers from other states who come to live the remainder of their lives vicariously, absorbed at second hand in the affairs of the film world. But what is chiefly remarkable about this book is that Mr. Landery has managed to bring out so clearly a point which strikes the visitor very forcibly—

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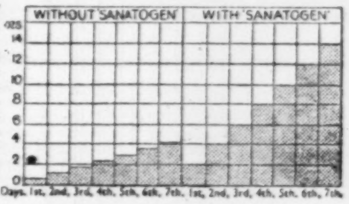

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Hollywood's astounding atmosphere of make-believe. This atmosphere, produced by the film world, pervades the whole of Hollywood life, and makes of it the City of Eternal Escape. The population of the screen world walks the street; over in the hills a cardboard replica of a Chinese city glitters in the sunshine; at night the sky is torn with searchlight beams announcing a film preview, or the opening of a new cinema. For those to whom the movies no longer offer an escape there are the many bars, the bottle in the bedroom, or, more fantastic, one of the strange religious cults. Those who have not witnessed Miss Aimee Semple MacPherson's revivalist activities in her million dollar temple might consider Mr. Landery's account wildly exaggerated, but I can vouch for its accuracy. Miss Violet Greener, the Ghost of Hollywood, giving messages from the spirit world on the mysteriously illuminated stage of her little temple, provides an even more extraordinary spectacle. Mr. Landery was not impressed with Hollywood, but that makes his book no less enjoyable. He has an easy style, is humorous and observant, and above all very unobtrusive. One remembers vividly the characters with whom he came in contact, and very little of Mr. Landery himself. He finally remarks that the sun shines perpetually—one would hardly think so if one judged by the photographs he includes in this book. ANTHONY BOWER

Letters of an Empress. Edited by G. PUSCH. *Massie.* 6*s.* 6*d.*

The object of this book is to expose Maria Theresa as a materfamilias. As an Empress she is a familiar figure, but behind that harassed authoritarian exterior there burned a heart of unexpected gold, as concerned about her own faults as a mother as she is anxious to instil the right and royal decorum into the minds of her children. The greatest family trial was her eldest son, the co-regent Joseph, whose plans for reform were years ahead of his time, and when they were brought into practice after the restraining hand of his mother had gone, a revolution was only narrowly averted. No one was ready for them. It is to him that the majority of the letters are addressed and though the strain between them is evident, Maria Theresa made every attempt to see her son's point of view. As an old lady she writes to him in 1771, "Tell me frankly my faults, and weaknesses, as I have always begged you to do. I shall do as much by you, but let no other than ourselves know or suspect that there is a difference of feeling." That is a sentiment remarkable in a middle-aged Empress, and compares strangely with the spectacle of another such, equally distressed, though turning to nobody.

Her influence was not always benign, she was a stickler on any point of Court etiquette, or princely behaviour. The rest of her letters revolve about these matters, and their importance should not be underestimated. Europe depended on them. The letters take the form of instructions to her children, on how to deport themselves in their grown up estate; several, very well chosen, to Marie Antionette, which bring every available ounce of pressure to bear on her, and show up the change from her early seclusion to her final reckless extravagance. A letter to Maximilian her younger son, and her favourite, on setting off for the Grand Tour, brings out the complete ground plan on which royal behaviour both to itself and to its subjects is shaped; more impersonal yet more revealing is a letter to Marie Caroline on her marriage to the notorious Ferdinand of Naples; the personality of the queen and the smallest of her own desires are to be submerged to those of her husband. To her family, even in her strictures, she is the loving mother, who does not stop at using emotional pressure, and she writes above all against resentfulness. To her ministers she is careful to be gracious. These letters, picked from the collection of fat tomes which form the imperial correspondence, show a very great woman, conservative only with age and authority, and, more than that, they form the background to the royal life not only of that country, but of that epoch, and of any state, at any time, where royalty is synonymous with power.

American Jazz Music. By WILDER HOBSON. *Dent.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Hobson has written a book about pure jazz music which goes much beyond the scope of any previous study. In discussing an art form which depends so much on the performance of the individual, it is inevitable that the writer must devote considerable space to the rival merits of the various jazz musicians. Nor is the history of such a new and potent form to be overlooked. But hitherto most books on jazz have stopped just there. The layman, timidly opening the pages, has been whirled from night club to night club and introduced to scores of personalities, each one endowed with a name more fantastic than the last. When his tour is finished he is left wondering just what it is all about. But Mr. Hobson, whilst dealing with the history of jazz, and discussing the merits of its leading exponents, finds time to discuss with detachment the basic appeal of jazz, its musical and social background. His discussion of the origins of jazz is of interest not only to the jazz fan but to any follower of music, and of contemporary culture, too. He emphasises the essential nature of good jazz—namely the expression of the ideas of the individual through a common medium: "In jazz the theme is important not in itself, but only in so far as it allows, or, better, stimulates the players and the orchestrator to do something in their own idiom."

Week-end Competitions

No. 528

Set by Robinson Moody

A first prize of two guineas and a second prize of half a guinea are offered for the best poems on Spring, in not more than twenty lines. (References to the war will be permissible but unwelcome.) The beginning as well as the end of *every* line must rhyme with some other beginning or end. As an example of one of the very many possible patterns, here is some doggerel:

> Lightly, quick stepping, now the jocund hours
> Sing like the birds; and, down-fluttering brightly,
> Showers set a sparkle on the newborn flowers.
> Bring, shepherds all, your garlands to the Spring!

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, March 29th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 526

Set by Doll Tearsheet

In a country rectory a clergyman has now for six months given a home to his wife's parents, on whose financial aid he has since his marriage been largely dependent. He is anxious for them to return to their house on the outskirts of London and equally anxious not to give offence. The usual prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea are offered for the best suggestions of how to achieve his aim.

Report by Doll Tearsheet

This problem is more difficult than most competitors realised. It is no use talking about drains or epidemics: the complacent refugees would betake themselves to Bournemouth or Bexhill for a month or even longer, and return to the rectory to enjoy the pleasures of a rustic summer. Secondly, I made the unhappy victim a parson because parsons never tell lies—a fact of which some competitors seem to be unaware. Two of the suggestions made I dismiss as evasions. R. A. Cormack writes succinctly, "Accept a 'call' to a poor London parish," a remedy that surely is worse than the disease for which it is prescribed. And from Doncaster comes this unsympathetic decision: "The clergyman should pay off his financial obligations to his wife's parents even if it meant selling personal possessions." But my clergyman has a quiverful of children and the usual miserable stipend. His "personal possessions" consist of late Victorian furniture, Arundel prints, the oar with which he stroked his College Eight, and a ten-year-old Morris. R. S. Jaffray again is unhelpful: "In view of the present re-shuffling of financial and other human values it seems to me that now is the time for the reverend gentleman to indulge in a luxury apparently hitherto denied him—that of speaking the truth." But it is not easy to tell elderly relatives you would be happier without them, even after six months. Pigs, dogs, hens, mice and parrots were suggested; evacuees from the slums also found several supporters. Probably the most practical advice was to intensify religious observances. Allan M. Laing contributed some neat couplets about the horrors of spring-cleaning:

> While from the carpetless and echoing stairs
> Are seen the ghostly dust-sheets on the chairs.

M. Cassel, Bedaw, Decima Rathbone and B. G. were the runners-up. I recommend that the prizes be divided between M. D. Kelly, Martin Walsh, J. C. B. Date and G. Green.

I

SUGGESTIONS FOR CLEARANCE WITHOUT OFFENCE

Remark on in-law's "tired look," and your fear that this relaxing (bracing, damp, dry, cold, hot) air does not suit them. Let your wife scold you for this, and yet be caught gazing at them anxiously from time to time.

Rub in the dullness of the countryside and its lack of society. (Do not mention *any* invitations which arrive.) Lightly read out list of London theatres, then set shoulders and go about parochial tasks. (Practise this.)

Arrange that all parish meetings should take place at your supper hour. (This will not be difficult, as they would already.)

Use one sitting room and one fire for the "duration." Ask if you may write your sermons in there.

Let meals be late, children noisy, maids negligent. Scold latter in mother-in-law's hearing until they give notice. (This is important.) Let your wife then be run off her legs doing all the work, particularly

PURELY PERSONAL

THE COLONEL told the Major, and the Major told the Adjutant, and the Adjutant told the Mess—and now they are all smoking King Six 6½d. Cigars.

Clear that Cold with VAPEX

BREATHE THE VAPOUR

V194

URGENT!

Paper is now rationed. Newsagents must now order sparingly. You will often be disappointed, and we may lose a sale, if you do not ASK YOUR NEWSAGENT TO RESERVE OR DELIVER YOUR COPY EACH WEEK, or become a Postal Subscriber (30s. yearly to any address in the world).

NOTE: If you are not getting your copy on Friday, or at latest Saturday, please inform the Publisher, giving name and address of newsagent.

NEW STATESMAN AND NATION
10, Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1

The Army that serves on every front

As you read this, 300 Red Shield Clubs are serving men of the Forces in Britain and France—thousands of refugees in China and Finland are receiving succour—homeless men and women are sheltered—children are protected and cared for by The Salvation Army all over the world.

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"HAYLERS FARM." Furnished house; safe, surrounded by grass fields; 3 reception rooms; 3 double, 2 single bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, Aga stove, Ideal boiler, usual offices. Own electricity, main water. Large garage, tennis courts, good garden. 5 *guineas* a week, reduction for long let. Apply, WARDEN, Blue Idol, Coolham, Horsham, Sussex.

STUDIO FLAT. Spacious furnished living room, kitchen, bathroom. Studio. View before 11 mornings, or write occupier, 9a Chester Square Mews, near Victoria.

MEVAGISSEY, S. Cornwall. Furnished bungalow to let, 2 bedrooms, 2 sitting-rooms, bathroom, electricity, sun-parlour overlooking sea. ALDEN, 27 Norham Road, Oxford.

FURNISHED. Small modernised 18th Century house with garden in quiet row, Canonbury. Rent for six months or longer to good tenants. 30*s.* p.w. Box 7086.

LAWN ROAD FLATS, N.W.3. One double, two single flats available. Rents from £79 p.a., unfurnished, £2 2*s.* weekly furnished. Full service available. Meals in the Isobar, a Club for the epicure of modest means. 'Phone PRIMROSE 6054.

SANDERSTEAD, 12 miles London (neutral area), 5 bedrooms, 3 sitting. Detd. Freehold. Best position in district. Near 2 stns. 30 mins., town. £2,000 (£1,600 could remain), or might let. 'Phone Roberts, Holborn 3216.

SUSSEX Woods. Freehold, £650. Seven rooms, garage. "The Kiln," Wisboro' Green, Billingshurst.

STEEP—one mile Petersfield Station, Hampshire. Furnished house, five bedrooms, sitting, dining, two kitchens, storeroom, bathroom, 2 lavs. Electric, main water and drainage, garage. Charming garden and views. One year. Apply DOWLER, Agent, Petersfield.

COTTAGE to let furnished. Chiltern Hills. Garden. Charming view. 25*s.* weekly. BENNETT, Loosely Row, nr. Princes Risborough.

TINY SHOP (or KIOSK) WANTED. Suitable for cigarette business in good London Shopping centre, with flat for two (bathroom) adjoining. Write BM/EFN, W.C.1.

W.8 DISTRICT. Non-basement house, quiet street, 6 rooms, kitchen, bathroom, fitted cupboards, boiler, etc. Very moderate rent to approved tenant 'Phone: Western 4281. Box 6616.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

SHEFFIELD Y.W.C.A. The Committee propose to appoint a General Secretary for this new centre. Building nearing completion. Opportunity for pioneer work. Experience of administration and Youth work essential. Applications with testimonials and references by March 30th to MRS. NEILL, Whinfell, Whirlow, Sheffield.

MALE assistant wanted for large and progressive bookshop in dreary but important provincial town. Must be exempt from military service, and have good knowledge of English literature. Interest in modern artistic, intellectual and political movements also desirable. Box 7069.

TUTOR, or Governess, with knowledge of KINESTHETIC method of teaching reading and writing, wanted for boy of 9 with DYSLEXIA STREPHOSYMBOLICA, otherwise up to standard for age. Full details on application. Box 7026.

YOUNG woman, with varied secretarial experience, seeks responsible work offering scope to keen, active intelligence. Box 6946.

GERMAN Refugee, fully qualified typist and shorthand, own typewriter, good English and French, desires post as housekeeper-secretary, excell. references. Box 7054.

DOMESTIC post wanted, country, near London, by mother with eight months' old child. Box 7076.

ABLE Graduate, economics and statistics, research, business, secretarial and agricultural experience, requires interesting work. Exempt army. Moderate salary. (Board as part if necessary). Box 7072.

GERMAN - ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPERT Young university woman, Austrian born and bred, nat. British. Expert translator, shorthand both languages, typing literary, educational, commercial organising experience, wants interesting qualified work. Box 7092.

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MISS J. D. WALLINGTON (and Mrs. Helen Whitticom). Health Practitioner, Osteopath, and Bonesetter, treats all conditions of ill-health by natural methods. Consultations by appointment. 1 Ashley Place, S.W.1. Tel.: Victoria 0131: and 2 Norton Way North, Letchworth. Tel.: Letchworth 885.

THEN there is always KINGSTON.
Enquiries to The Secretary, Kingston, Edinburgh.

PERSONAL

PEACE offensive? Not to ANTHONY PANTING, who registers on April 6th. Portraits for as long as possible. 5 Paddington Street, W.1. WELbeck 4950.

THOSE interested in sharing in experiment in Christian Communism, which includes families, kindly write Box 7073.

SOLICITORS (London) would like to hear from another Solicitor or firm with a view to amalgamation. Box 7604.

LEARN GERMAN with young AUSTRIAN lady. Lessons, or Correspondence method, also translations. Box 7093.

NERVY WOMAN welcomed. Quiet, dieted, comfortable. Cared for. Kent Cottage. BM/BCGX, W.C.1.

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 416

that of bringing up her parents' early morning cups of tea. She should be tired and worn-looking, yet " bright." Be tired, worn-looking and " bright " yourself, not only on your usual days, but all the others, too.

Start speaking of parish affairs often, and as often check yourself. Remain checked, in spite of entreaties.

Have windows open at all times ; utilise rain, fog, frost, ice and snow to the best advantage. Touch on the healthy gravel soil of London, and droop into pallid listlessness as you speak. Rouse yourself with a visible effort and invite in-laws to accompany you for a parish walk. Choose your weather.

Run out of anthracite for the hall stove, coal for the kitchen range, oil for the lamps, sugar for the bottled gooseberries. See to it that the meat rations are exhausted by Wednesday.

Let German measles be frequently discussed. Remark on their danger to any patient over fifty in a poorly heated house.

Have only two armchairs in the sitting room. (This is important.)

Accentuate any mannerisms you may have which are known to annoy your wife's relations. Cultivate some new ones.

If all else fails, burn down the Rectory. It is insured.

M. D. KELLY

II

DEAR SIR,

Believe me, I was once in the predicament as your confrère. When I got married, one of my wife's old relations came to stop with us and they seemed as if it would be for ever and they paid well, now we wanted a honeymoon or what a ray grinder could get as near as one.

I got a friend to write to me the following :

DEAR MARTIN,

I want your advice to what I should do (Sid Walker was not known then 16 years since). I have an old cupple, yes the best-hearted pair you ever know I'd rather die than give them offence there are staying with me there reglur pals none of that sponging sort but Martin so how you love folk home to me is a nest with no strange birds in it. What'd you do ? I think if they understood they would be wending home themself very happy that there was no ill-feeling. Yours sincerely,

B. M.

Then I left it on sideboard for wife in a hurry to work. When my wife came down they tactfully told her they would be off at night.

Yours sincerely, MARTIN WALSH

III

" The gardener ? " said the Rector. " Oh, he's making an air-raid shelter."

" A shelter ? " asked his father-in-law. " Surely that is unnecessary here ? "

" I thought we ought to have one," said the Rector. " It sets a good example, you know."

" But why," said his mother-in-law, " in the front garden ? Most unsightly."

" Yes," said the Rector. " Yes. But there are reasons. I don't know that I ought to reveal them."

" Come along now, John," said his mother-in-law. " Don't be foolish."

" Very well, then. You know the big mound in the field at the back ? "

" Ah, yes," replied his father-in-law. " The tumulus."

" I have heard suggestions that it is being used as a munitions dump."

" Nonsense ! " said his mother-in-law. " A little place like this. Munitions, indeed ! "

" Don't be so hasty, my dear," said her husband. " It is the remoteness of the place which makes it so suitable, surely ? "

" I fear so," said the Rector. " I fear so. Though with aeroplanes as they are to-day, I doubt whether any place is truly remote from the stresses of the times. I was speaking to young Bloggs the other day. He is in the Ordnance Corps, you know."

" I think," said his mother-in-law, " that if any . . . catastrophe did occur, old folks like ourselves would be rather a drag on you. Perhaps it would be better for us to go back home."

" Oh, no," said the Rector, politely. . . .

" Not at all, my dear," said the Rector to his wife. " I told no falsehoods. I *did* talk to young Bloggs, you know, and I *did* suggest to you that the mound might be used for that purpose. After all, one does hear one's own voice, doesn't one ? "

J. C. B. DATE

IV

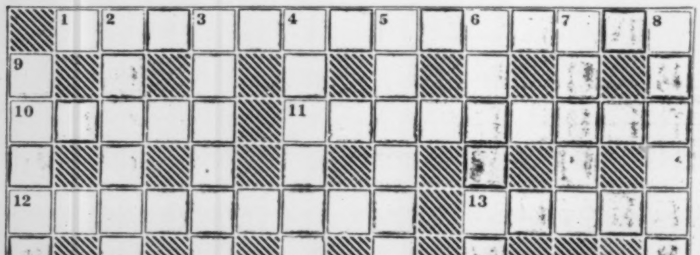
England being a Christian country, all that the clergyman needs to do is to become especially zealous in the exercise of his religion. This can give offence to no one, indeed such professional industry can only be accounted a virtue.

But I guarantee that lengthy family prayers, freely sprinkled with exordiums from Lamentations and Isaiah, held twice daily ; compulsory attendance at all services ; prayer meetings in the drawing-room three times weekly ; compulsory stitchery for the heathen on the part of all the ladies of the household ; frequent exhortations to self-denial ; and the sudden groans and cries of an afflicted conscience occurring two or three times a day usually at mealtimes ; will soon drive the in-laws home to their own little nest on the outskirts of London. Most people would rather face enemy raiders any day than suffer the consolations of their State Religion.

G. GREEN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 524

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later that first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to " CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Miss Judy Dunnicliff, 71 Forest Road East, Nottingham.

ACROSS

1. Necessary state of the Emperor's wife. (14)
10. A dread creature comes out of it. (5)
11. Packets of dates. (9)
12. Would it be the downfall of a rowing Adam ? (9)
13. He was, of course, born on Valentine's day. (5)
14. And coal put on in pieces. (7)
15. What will tower above around us. (7)
17. Kind of water that has a catch in it. (7)
19. Dance apace. (7)
22. Just about in time. (5)
24. Golf courses where boxing is allowed ? (9)
25. Crockery for a house party only ? (9)
26. Confidential ideas (5)
27. The result of a silent reunion perhaps. (13)

DOWN

2. Suggests the sort of lodgings that includes board. (9)
3. Virginia takes a slight reverse in this. (7)
4. Seems to involve putting one's foot down on the gathering. (15)
5. This blossom rarely falls. (15)
6. The ego in us is fiery. (7)
7. Incorporated as kings. ? (5)
8. One of Sweet Hortense's drawbacks. (7)
9. A 351 Roman composition. (6)
16. The aim of going into camp ? (9)
17. Queen of Ruritania. (6)
18. Condition of one deprived of a woolly. (7)
20. The measure of Orion's Belt. (7)
21. Hung by Mr. William Sticker. (6)
23. An artless radiator. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

▨	A	P	P	L	E	D	U	M	P	L	I	N	G	▨
▨	L	▨	A	▨	A	▨	M	▨	I	▨	N	▨	E	▨
L	L	A	B	E	S	A	B	▨	G	I	V	I	N	G
▨	O	▨	U	▨	T	▨	R	▨	M	▨	I	▨	E	▨
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D	E	M	M	U	G	▨	L	I	T	E	R	A	L	S
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M	O	N	A	L	I	S	A	▨	T	H	R	I	C	E
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A	D	V	E	R	B	▨	D	A	L	M	A	T	I	A
▨	E	▨	R	▨	L	▨	S	▨	A	▨	N	▨	O	▨
P	R	E	S	S	E	D	▨	S	T	A	T	I	N	G

NOTES :—Thrice—" The Hunting of the Snark."
Pabulum—i.e. rationed

London Amusements

OPERA

SADLER'S WELLS, Rosebery Ave., E.C.1.
2d. bus fr. Piccadilly. (Ter. 1672) *9d.* to *7s. 6d.* Next Week:
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WEDNESDAY: at 7, DON GIOVANNI.
THURSDAY: at 7, CARMEN.
SATURDAY: (30th) 2.30, MADAM BUTTERFLY.
SATURDAY: (30th) 7, LA TRAVIATA.

THEATRES

APOLLO. Ger. 2663. Evenings at 8.15.
Matinees, Wed., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.
GODFREY TEARLE, ANGELA BADDELEY in
EMLYN WILLIAMS' Play
"THE LIGHT OF HEART"

DUCHESS. (Tem. 8243.) At 6.0 & 8.40.
Matinees, Sats. & Easter Monday, 2.30.
RONALD FRANKAU in A New Revue
"BEYOND COMPERE"
with Ted Ray, Renee Roberts, Gerry Fitzgerald.

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. EVGS. at 8.30.
Mats., WEDS. and SATS., 2.30.
EDITH EVANS. PEGGY ASHCROFT in
COUSIN MURIEL
By Clemence Dane.

HAYMARKET. Whi. 9832. Evenings 8.15.
Matinees: WED. & SAT., 2.30.
Michael REDGRAVE, Irene EISINGER in
THE BEGGAR'S OPERA
A GLYNDEBOURNE PRODUCTION
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Now over 250 times at this theatre,
MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL
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Every Evg. at 8, & Wed., Thurs., Sat., 2.30. 1/6 to 6/-.
Special Matinee Easter Monday.

PHOENIX. (Tem. 8611.) Evgs., 8. Th., Sat., 2.30.
JESSIE MATTHEWS & SONNIE HALE
invite you to
"COME OUT TO PLAY!"
A New Song, Dance and Comedy Show 10/6 to 1/6.

PICCADILLY. (Ger. 4506.) Evgs., 7.45 (ex. Mon.)
Wed., Thurs., Sat., 2.30. Extra perf. Easter Monday. 7.45.
SYBIL THORNDIKE, EMLYN WILLIAMS.
THE CORN IS GREEN
A COMEDY BY EMLYN WILLIAMS.

QUEEN'S. Ger. 4517. Evgs. 6.15 & 9 (ex. Mons.)
Matinees, Saturdays, at 2.30.
BEATRICE LILLIE BOBBY HOWES
and FRED EMNEY in
ALL CLEAR REVUE

SAVILLE. Tem. 4011. 8.15. Wed., Th., Sat., 2.30.
RUNAWAY LOVE
GEORGE GEE, BARRY LUPINO, BILLY MAYERL,
Last weeks. Mat. Easter Mon.

STRAND. 8.30. Th. & Sat., 2.30. (LAST WEEKS.)
ROBERTSON HARE. ALFRED DRAYTON in
SPOTTED DICK
A new farce by BEN TRAVERS.
"YOU WILL LAUGH AND LAUGH AND LAUGH."

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Mervyn Johns. Anna Konstam. (Tem. Bar 3028)

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SACHA GUITRY in
"REMONTONS LES CHAMPS ELYSEES" (A)
Also Danielle Darrieux and Charles Boyer in
"*MAYERLING*" (A)

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 416

CONCERT

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HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS—continued

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

WAR LOAN AND MINIMUM PRICES — SIMON'S BUNGLING — HOME RAILS

It is difficult to imagine a worse psychologist than Sir John Simon or a Chancellor more calculated to depress universal sentiment. On Monday of this week he had some beautiful cards to play. He had the truth to reveal about the over-subscription of the new £300 millions 3 per cent. War Loan, applications over £45,000 having been cut down to 82.6 per cent. He had also a statement to make about a new Maginot Line for the gilt-edged market which, if disclosed at the right moment, and in a happy way, was not unlikely to instil more confidence in the City. But what clumsiness he displayed! The official news of the over-subscription of the new War Loan was kept back so long that the City was almost convinced that the issue was a flop. And in this period of doubt—before the result of the loan was known—it came out that new minimum prices were to be established in the gilt-edged market at levels which were about 2½ to 3 points below the current prices of the long-dated stocks. What could this mean to a market in the dark except that the Government was afraid of the future and was anxious to establish a new line of defence before the critical attack came? It is small wonder that the new Loan opened at ¼ discount and fell to ½ discount and that old 3½ per cent. War Loan sank to 98½. Sir John Simon had bungled his cards. What the old women of Downing Street fail to realise is that the City is not afraid of bad war news but of bad leadership and feeling is growing very strong among business men that if we have to find over £6½ millions a day for the war we ought soon to see results—not indecision.

* * *

In his statement to the House the Chancellor explained that the policy of the Government was to aim at stability of interest rates on the basis of 2 per cent. for five years and 3 per cent. for 15 to 19 years, as expressed in the recent 2 per cent. Conversion and 3 per cent. War Loan issues. "If it turns out I can get money cheaper," he added, "so much the better." But the truth is that he will never get money any cheaper if he plays his financial cards so badly.

* * *

Too much attention, I thought, was given in the railway market to a jobber's memorandum on prospective yields for the junior stocks at various stages of the earnings under the Government agreement. I may recall that under this agreement, which foreshadowed total earnings rising from £41 millions upwards, the four main line companies and the London Passenger Transport Board draw out of the pool in certain fixed proportions. At stage 2 the total pool earnings are £44.6 millions and from them L.M. & S. receive £15 millions, allowing a dividend on the Ordinary of 2.3 per cent., Great Western £7 millions, allowing a dividend of 4.6 per cent. on the Ordinary, and Southern £7.2 millions, allowing a dividend of 2.7 per cent. on the Deferred Ordinary. The jobber, in his memorandum, took pains to show that at stage 2 a 10 per cent. yield would be obtained from L.M. & S. Ordinary at 23, Great Western Ordinary at 46, and Southern Deferred at 27, the present prices being 21½, 46¼ and 20¼ respectively. In other words, the jobber intended to reveal an anomaly—namely, that Southern Deferred was nearly 7 points too cheap. But this argument has little force when it is realised that at £46.6 millions Southern Deferred has already reached the maximum which it is allowed to earn (3.2 per cent.), whereas L.M. & S. Ordinary is only earning 2.7 per cent. against its maximum of 8.1 per cent., and Great Western 4.9 per cent. against its maximum of 8.1 per cent. The home railway junior stocks must not, therefore, be valued on a strictly mathematical basis. The crucial question for the home railways is the length of the war. The longer the war lasts the more the home railways will earn, and if the market takes the view that a collapse of the German peace offer implies a longer and more bitter war, then it should take a more bullish view of home railway prospects. In other words, it should visualise the home railway earnings not at £44.6 millions but at £54 millions when L.M. & S. can earn 4.3 per cent. and Great Western 6.6 per cent. on the Ordinary stocks, while Southern is limited to 3.2 per cent. Bombing apart, the more bearish you feel about the war, the more bullish you should feel about L.M. & S. and Great Western Ordinary stocks.

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UNITED KINGDOM LIFE OFFICE

THE LAST WAR AND THIS—STRONGER POSITION TO-DAY.

SIR ERNEST BENN ON SPENDING AND SAVING.

THE CENTENARY YEAR OF THE INSTITUTION.

THE Ninety-ninth Annual General Meeting of the members of the United Kingdom Temperance and General Provident Institution was held on Wednesday, March 20th, 1940, in the Incorporated Accountants' Hall, Victoria Embankment, W.C.

The Chairman (Sir Ernest J. P. Benn, Bt.) said:—

My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once again I have the honour to submit for your approval the Report and Accounts of this great Institution, this being the ninety-ninth occasion on which similar Accounts have been presented.

Directors

The acceptance by the Marquess of Lothian of the post of Ambassador to the United States involved, to our very great regret, his resignation, and we were very happy when Lord Glamis accepted our unanimous invitation to become one of us. Lord Glamis brings us a wealth of commercial experience, chiefly from the coalfield, but it also happens that he is the first professional soldier to be a Director of the Institution.

With the outbreak of war, Mr. Eustace Illingworth, who has rendered such valuable service for many years, determined that he would make way for someone who could give more time to our affairs. The seat has been filled by the election of Mr. John Armstrong Drexel, whose name stands high in the banking world. As Chairman of the British Overseas Bank, and in other similar ways, Mr. Drexel is actively engaged in keeping open, so far as that is possible, those financial channels through which alone the trade of the world can flow. I know of no more vital public service, and, incidentally, a service upon which the prosperity of this Institution largely depends.

In moving the adoption of your Accounts a year ago, I described my task as "perhaps more difficult than ever before in my experience." That was in a time of peace, and I suppose I ought to approach my duty to-day, in the midst of all the risks of war, with still greater diffidence. But strangely enough, that is not how I feel about it. A year ago we faced the unknown; to-day we have trials and difficulties in plenty, but in a curious sort of way we do seem to know better where we are. We are up against grim reality, instead of mythical possibilities.

War

The War, as war, is going far better than was thought to be possible up to last August.

We are not troubled, as we sometimes were in 1914–18, with a single doubt as to the ultimate issue of the conflict. This really wonderful position has been reached by the thorough-going nature of our national preparations, and the determination of every individual to maintain our strength intact.

For this purpose it has been thought wise to plan and control every detail of our lives. We have willingly surrendered hard-won liberties. The middle classes, who bear most of the strain and get least of the credit, shopkeepers and professional men and women, have faced loss without a murmur, so long as they felt they were thus serving the national interest. Merchants, brokers, agents, jobbers, commercial travellers have been put out of business by controls and pools. Markets have been abolished, and the consequential damage to our economic foundations is beyond computation. Still there is no word of protest if all this is helping to win the War. Doubts and discontents do, however, creep in, when it is found that some of the control is planned and exercised by avowed enemies of private enterprise. It is open to doubt whether all of these costly schemes would have seen the light if war winning had been the only motive in the minds of their devisors.

As we planned for war, we must also plan for peace, remembering that peace and war are opposites. Most of the things we have done for war will need undoing for peace, and we must be sure that when the War is over, the freedom for which we have fought is duly restored to us, and in full measure.

Our Institution was and is founded upon freedom, the rights of property, the sanctity of contract, and above all, on a full measure of confidence and faith in the individual.

It is of the first importance that we should be quite clear that control and management, with all their costly blunders, while necessary for war, are devices for use by dictators who rely not upon confidence, but upon force, and that these things have no lot or part in any true conception of the peaceful democratic State.

The levity with which control schemes are made, altered, withdrawn and revived only strengthens the conclusion that public affairs have a long way to go before they reach the standards of responsibility common to the City of London.

The Fund

It would be idle, in these circumstances, to pretend that your vast estate is unaffected by the events of the last six months. On the other hand, it would be wrong to overestimate the extent of the damage.

A very different position arose in September, 1939, from that of 1914. The anxieties and uncertainties of recent years had prompted us to set aside a million, outside the total of our fund, to meet unforeseen contingencies—a quite unusual precaution in assurance accountancy. If we entertained any hopes, as in 1914, of a short and sharp struggle, we left those hopes out of our calculations, and accepted to the letter the Government's view of a three years' war. Whereas twenty-five years ago the full effects crept gradually upon us, this time we discounted them all, right at the start, with the result that we feel that if there is any safety anywhere in a time of modern war, we have rather more of it to-day than we had at the corresponding meeting twenty-five years ago.

So far as we can see, our investments are well chosen to stand the strain of the future, but insofar as profits and bonuses are governed by taxation, they must suffer their share of the general impoverishment.

At current Stock Exchange prices, we have sufficient to meet all our liabilities, for sums assured and bonuses, calculated on the most stringent basis; in addition, our Reserve Fund of a million is untouched, and above all that there is still a small hidden reserve.

Spending and Saving

Many people are puzzled by the problems of spending and saving, the small saver in particular finding the arguments difficult to apply to his own circumstances. This and similar Institutions are able to provide the perfect solution. The truth can be stated in very simple terms. "First of all refrain so far as you can from the purchase of anything which involves an import from abroad, or which absorbs labour wanted by the Government for the purposes of the War. Then carry on with your normal purchases of other things to keep the trade of the country going, exercising a little more than your usual economy. If your income remains stationary, or improves, you will in this War find yourself with a surplus, which if applied to Life Assurance will enable us to give additional support to War Loans and provide you with the best of all possible investments."

The Chief Economic Adviser to the Government, Lord Stamp, in a recent speech to a Building Society, showed clearly that money spent on the purchase of an existing house found its way into the Government coffers. The argument applies not only to Building Societies but with added force to Life Assurance Offices.

New Business

By the end of August we had secured a substantial rise in the volume of new business written, and I was looking forward to reporting to you yet another record year. But the outbreak of war dispelled those hopes. For a few weeks the general uncertainty caused people to defer consideration of wise plans for the distant future. That phase is passing. The Institution itself, following the precedent of 1914, declined for the first few weeks to consider covering War Risks. That phase has also passed, and we are now offering attractive terms to cover every risk to life.

Rate of Interest

Taxation at the drastic rates thought to be necessary by the Chancellor has not yet had its full effect upon our net rate of interest, and we must, I fear, expect the 1940 figures to show larger declines than I now have to report to you. Our gross rate has fallen slightly by reason of defaults due to the War, and we have probably already experienced the worst in this category. For the year, your Fund has thus earned £4 19*s*. 5*d*. per cent. gross against £5 2*s*. 4*d*. per cent., a diminution of 2*s*. 11*d*. per cent. The nett rate falls from £4 1*s*. 6*d*. per cent. to £3 14*s*. 2*d*. per cent., a diminution of 7*s*. 4*d*. per cent., the tax-gatherer taking the difference.

Expense Ratio

Your directors are very pleased to report a slight drop in the expense ratio at a time when an increase might well have been excused. Notwithstanding the heavy calls for A.R.P., and the expense of the reorganisation and removal of the Accounts Department, the ratio has fallen from 14.7 per cent. to 14.6 per cent.

War Loans and Insurance "Offers"

Twenty-five years ago, one of my predecessors, the late Sir Thomas Whittaker, addressed you on the duties of a Life Office towards War Loans. We were then, as now, doing all that was possible to support the Government in the prosecution of the Great War. We were faced then, as now, with competitors who felt it appropriate to use War Loans as a means to new business and were criticised for what some thought to be lack of enterprise and even lack of patriotism. Our views have not changed in this matter. We invite insurers to accept the protection of the £26,000,000 of our general fund and to share in the profits or losses arising from our investments. That we believe to be the proper basis of Mutual Life Assurance and we are not prepared to earmark any particular investment to any particular policy.

We applied for our share of the recent War Loan and our allotment with all its prospects belongs in equal measure to the whole body of our members. Any increase in our membership will strengthen our position and enable us to give appropriate support, as we did in 1914–18, to each of the War Loans as they come along.

Our Centenary

With this year the Institution achieves its Centenary, and next March, if you will still put up with me, I hope to be addressing you in far happier circumstances. We are considering how we may most appropriately celebrate a full hundred years of public service.

The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted.